The LEAGUE of EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

THE TEMPEST

this is NOT a Library

NO BROWSING

SWEAT BOOKS

TRUE SWEAT

HEY KIDS!

ZOM

CRASH

3-D

JUNK SHOPPE

CLOSED

ALAN MOORE

KEVIN O'NEILL

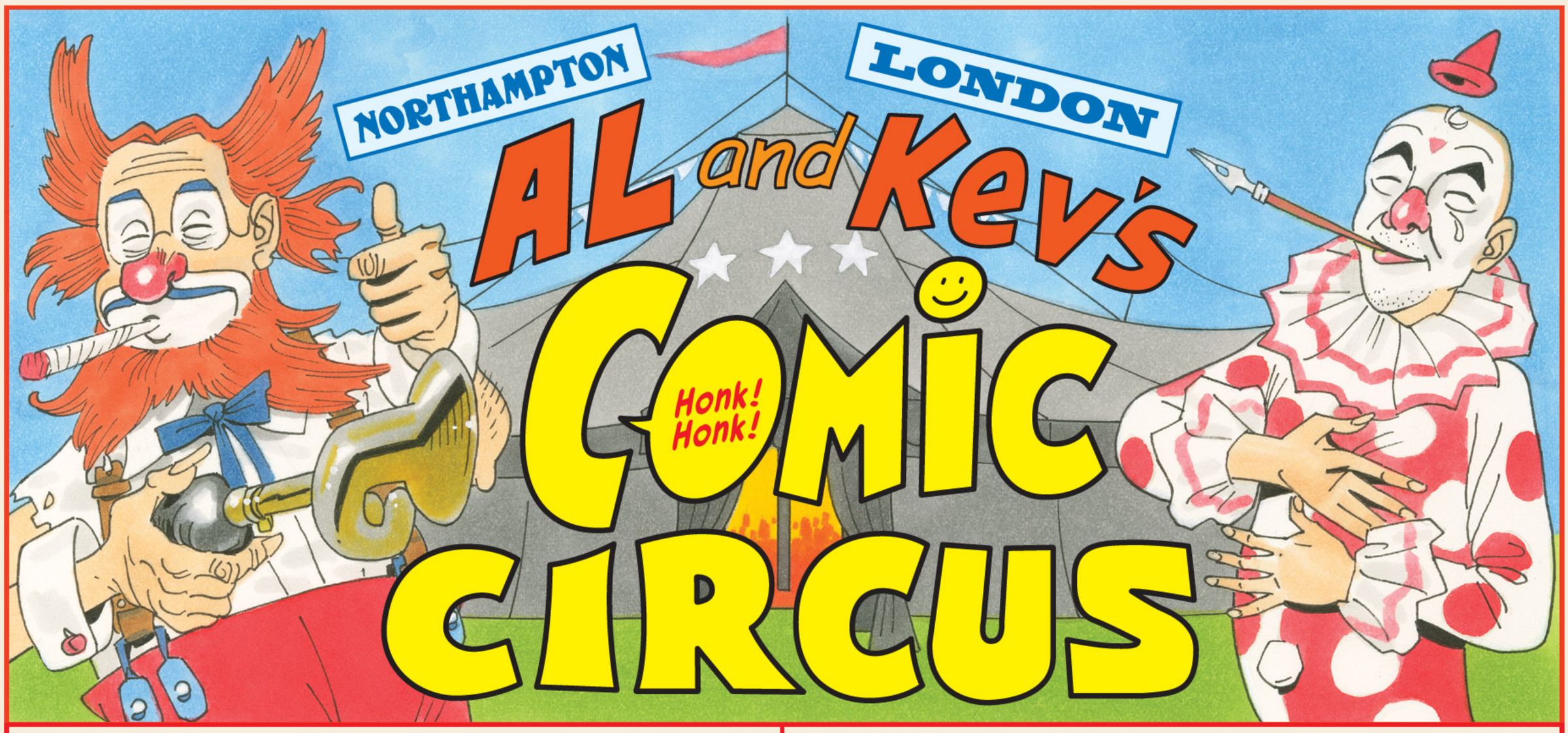
Ben Dimagmaliw

Todd Klein

1872
O'Neill

THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN Vol. IV

THE TEMPEST



BIG BEN DIMAGMALIW

The PAINTBALL WIZARD and his RAINBOW WALL of DEATH! Colour him MAD!

Calligraphic Contortionist

TODD KLEIN

Risking Life, Limb and Testimonials, the Daring Man of Letters Signwrites - Designs - and Unicycles Above MAN EATING LIONS! WHY DOES HE DO IT???

FEARLESS Eye-tamers

CHARLES BARNARD & CHRISTIAN LeBLANC

FOR THRILLS AND SPILLS! They put the COR in Visual CORTEX!

Introducing *Fumetti Fakir* **JOE BROWN**

Watch him bring Photos to Dizzying Life!

With: Sayed Sattar Hasan as Jack Nemo, Catherine Nesbitt as Mina Murray & Tamsyn Payne's Costumes, Make-up and Support

HIGH WIRE PUBLISHING

(Not for the faint-hearted)

TREMBLE as Deadlines Fly by your Face! GASP as Invoices Plunge into Vats of Fire, and be ASTONISHED as Accounts are Juggled & Books Balanced Blindfolded! With the Immortal...

TOP SHELF MAESTRO CHRIS STAROS

AND

KNOCKABOUT Clown Car Funsters TONY BENNETT & JOSH PALMANO

FULL SUPPORTING CAST

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And Our GRAND FINALE! AL the Writer AND KEV the Artist's

Bareback Farewell HEMP TEA PARTY *with Tightwad Walkers and Buckets of Litter*

Indicia Royal Command Performance

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This book belongs to

Thus is the course of fable's river run
To flood with jewels the delta of its end.
Here is the summit peak of let's-pretend;
Now is the story of all stories done,
And we hail our imaginary friends
Before the curtain of the stars descends.

The LEAGUE of EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

ILLUSTRATED *Masterpieces*

Featuring Stories by the World's Gravest Authors

THE TEMPEST

ALAN MOORE • KEVIN O'NEILL

No. 1 OF SIX

GREAT BRITAIN

O'Neill

A League LOOK-AND-LAMENT Feature: CHEATED CHAMPIONS OF YOUR CHILDHOOD

No. 1: LEO BAXENDALE

Wotcher, mates! It's your madcap masters of ceremonies Al and Kev here, pretending to be two frankly baffled editorial employees working for British juvenile weeklies in the 1960s, who are themselves pretending to be unlikely English versions of Stan Lee and Jack Kirby for reasons they don't entirely understand, with the whole conceit thus being only comprehensible to elderly indigenous men who can't get over their childhoods – and if that's not a proper mouthful, then we don't know what bloomin' well is!

We wanted to kick off our brand-new, trouser-tickling TEMPEST serial with a regular feature celebrating the brutally mugged maestros of Britain's bright and breezy comic field, and where better to start than with that most genuinely glorious organised crime victim of them all, the legendary Leo Baxendale?

Born 1930 in working-class Lancashire and serving in the RAF before landing his first art job with Lancashire's *Evening Post,* Leo combined a love of *Express* cartoonist Giles – archetypal urban characters against beautifully realised English backdrops – with the mania of *The Goon Show,* into a style as springy and energetic as his trademark crop of curly hair. In 1952 he started work for notoriously frugal Dundee publishers D.C. Thomson, who famously issued metal holders for worn-down pencil stubs, creating the majority of their most popular characters (such as Minnie the Minx, Little Plum, the Bash Street Kids, and the Three Bears) before leaving the company in 1962, feeling overburdened and undercompensated. In 1964 he commenced work for Odhams' Marvel-aping 'Power Comics' line, creating legendary features like *Eagle-Eye, Grimly Feendish* and *Bad Penny* for Odhams' *Wham!* and *Smash!* weeklies. In short, he provided the furniture for most British childhoods.

Working for Fleetway/IPC after they absorbed Odhams, Leo finally abandoned weekly children's comics in exasperation during 1975, going on to produce the more sophisticated *Willy the Kid* for Duckworth, a legitimate grown-up publisher who treated creators fairly. Justifiably angry at the misappropriation of his most iconic creations, his curls greying as he reached his fifties, he fought a seven-year legal battle, for which he prepared with intense physical training, to retrieve his characters from D.C. Thomson. Predictably, as with creators around the world battling companies with inexhaustible legal resources, Leo was forced into an out-of-court settlement for a fraction of his beloved characters' value, their loss going a long way towards breaking the heart of this homegrown juvenile genius.

Focussed upon publishing with his Reaper Books imprint in later life and producing shrewd political analyses such as *The Encroachment,* Leo died of cancer in April 2017, leaving his wife Peggy and their five children. One of the giants on whose shoulders contemporary British comics are standing, an incalculable influence on everyone who followed him from the mighty political cartoonist Steve Bell to the current authors, Leo Baxendale was one of this country's greatest treasures and deserved a better industry to work in.

Blimey! After that lot we need a tea-break! See you with more media misery next issue, pals!

Al and Kev

ALAN (The Writer) MOORE
KEVIN (The Artist) O'NEILL
BEN (The Colourist) DIMAGMALIW
TODD (The Letterer) KLEIN
CHRIS (The U.S. Publisher) STAROS
TONY (The U.K. Co-Publisher) BENNETT
JOSH (The U.K. Co-Publisher) PALMANO

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PROLOGUE I:
KOR, UGANDA,
2009.

WHAT...

WHAT *IS* IT? DO YOU KNOW?

SOME SORT OF PLASMA, WE THINK. POSSIBLY EVEN *ALIVE.*

HERE, LET US HELP...

I FEEL POSITIVELY FOOLISH. THIS ISN'T SOME HEARTLESS *JOKE...?*

JUST COME WITH US.

I ALWAYS FORGET HOW THIS *FEELS...*

YOU'RE DOING FINE. ONLY A LITTLE FURTHER.

OH *GOD!* OH GOD, WHAT'S *HAPPENING?*

DON'T WORRY. IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS. IT'S...

...ALWAYS...

ORLANDO

Oh.

OH, ISN'T THIS *SMASHING?*

PROLOGUE II: THE CITY OF **WE**, 2996.

BURT? I ZITZED THAT REMAINDERED **MANSHONYAGGER,** BUT IT'S RUINED OUR **SCHEDULE.** THE MARSLORD'S JUNIOR ENFORCERS WERE RIGHT **BEHIND** US!

IF WE CAN REACH THOSE MUTATED BRATS' HEADQUARTERS IN **WE** BEFORE THEY DO, THEN THERE'S STILL **TIME,** DARLING!

WE'RE **IN...** BUT THERE'S THREE DOTS APPROACHING ON MY HAND SCANNER. THEY MUST BE USING **AERO-JEWELLERY.**

WE'RE PROBABLY WITHIN THE LITTLE GIRL'S **PSI-RANGE...**

VOTE A. MOORE

THEN THEY KNOW OUR **INTENTIONS,** AND WHY WE LURED THEM AWAY FROM THEIR **BASE.**

BURT, THERE IT IS NOW-- **UNGUARDED,** LIKE WE **PLANNED!**

AND HERE'S THEIR **AEONOSPHERE!** WE CAN DELIVER OUR WARNING TO THE **PAST!**

UH-OH. BETTER HAND ME THAT **NOOK-ZOOK,** SWEETHEART! WE'VE GOT **COMPANY!**

DROP YOUR **WEAPONS,** SPACE PIRATES, AND SUBMIT TO **THE LORD OF MARS!**

I'M **FINISHED,** BABY! TAKE THE AEONOSPHERE AND DELIVER OUR MESSAGE **ALONE!**

HURRY! THAT JUNIOR **ELECTRODIRECTOR** MEANS **BUSINESS!** I-I LOVE YOU, SATIN!

IT'S SET TO **1958** FOR SOME REASON. I'LL PRESS THIS BUTTON, AND...

1958

2996

2758

2570

2312

ETERNITY SPLITS AS **SATIN ASTRO** TOPPLES THROUGH TIME INTO THE UNMAPPED TERRITORY OF PRE-DISASTER **HISTORY!**

PROLOGUE III: VAUXHALL, LONDON, 2009.

WE HAVE YOUR EMERGENCY BRIEFING SET UP THROUGH HERE, SIR.

SORRY ABOUT THE ***DISORGANISATION.*** YOUR PREDECESSOR'S ***DISAPPEARANCE*** TOOK US RATHER BY ***SURPRISE,*** I'M AFRAID.

CAN YOU GET HIM THROUGH THERE ALL RIGHT? WE'RE TRYING TO MAKE THIS PLACE MORE ACCESSIBLE...

OKAY, ON SCREEN HERE IS THE ***INCIDENT*** SITE FROM SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.

WE'VE STILL NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THAT'S WHEN MS. NIGHT ***VANISHED.***

DAYS EARLIER SHE'D BEEN VISITED HERE BY ***THIS*** WOMAN--ALLEGEDLY A JOURNALIST, BUT SO FAR ***UNTRACEABLE.***

WE KNOW NIGHT TOOK VARIOUS OLD DOCUMENTS BEFORE VANISHING, INCLUDING SOMETHING CALLED ***THE BLACK DOSSIER.***

BEYOND THAT, WE'VE GOT NOTHING. DO YOU HAVE ANY OBSERVATIONS YOURSELF, SIR JAMES?

YES. YOU WILL... *HUHHH*...

YOU WILL HENCEFORTH ADDRESS ME... *HUHH*...

ADDRESS ME AS ***M.***

HUHHHH

The TEMPEST

ONE: FAREWELL TO FOREVER

SO THIS IS ***KOR.*** FROM WHAT I HEAR, WHEN QUEEN AYESHA FINALLY DIED IN THE MID-SEVENTIES, AMIN'S TROOPS ***DEVASTATED*** THE PLACE.

I THOUGHT JANNI NEMO SAID SHE'D KILLED AYESHA IN BERLIN, BACK IN THE ***1940S?***

OH, AYESHA'S ***ALWAYS*** GETTING KILLED.

SO, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

GOOD QUESTION. WE DON'T REALLY HAVE A ***SUPPORT SYSTEM*** ANYMORE, DO WE? I'M NOT SURE OF OUR STATUS WITH PROSPERO OR THE BLAZING WORLD...

HM. WELL, ***I'M*** FAIRLY SURE OF MY CURRENT STATUS WITH M.I.5--SOME SORT OF ***ELIMINATION*** LIST, I'D IMAGINE.

WHAT ABOUT LINCOLN ISLAND? WE GOT ON WELL WITH ***JANNI*** MOST OF THE TIME.

YES, BUT ISN'T HER GRANDSON ***JACK*** THE CURRENT NEMO? WE HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE HE WAS ***SEVEN.***

BESIDES, LINCOLN'S A LONG WAY AWAY.

THAT ISN'T NECESSARILY A PROBLEM--BUT PRINCE DAKKAR ***IS*** THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS ***TERRORIST.***

Huh.

YOU OBVIOUSLY NEVER MET HIS GREAT-***GRAND-FATHER.***

THE DRUM 'N' BASSMENT

TRACEY JORDAN 'HONKY GRANDMA BE TRIPPIN' II

HARD COR!

OUT

CRIB

SOLD OUT Featuring SOLD OUT...

FRACK HO be BACK SAT

BAG For LIFE

THERE'S NOBODY HERE. YOU MUST HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN.

"HUH? MAN, THAT'S MESSED UP."

HUH?

MAN, THAT'S MESSED UP...

Rest Rooms

MORE TITS

UTILUS

WC pee see

SATIN

OUR **STAR CHAMBER** IS STILL HERE, THEN. THAT'S SOMETHING, I SUPPOSE.

THE SONIC RESIDUE SUGGESTS THIS PLACE WAS LAST INHABITED ROUGHLY TWO MONTHS AGO.

Continental 2

?
WOOF

RIGHT AROUND THE TIME OF THE **INCIDENT.** OH, THIS FEELS SO **STRANGE,** JUST **BEING** HERE.

STILL, WORK TO DO. LET'S HOPE VULL LEFT HIS **FILING SYSTEM** ACCESSIBLE...

VULL WASN'T HERE RECENTLY. THE SOUND-SIGNATURE'S **FEMALE.**

REALLY? I'VE FOUND HIS **FILES...**

ANYTHING USEFUL?

POSSIBLY. VULL'S EVEN ARCHIVED SOME **COMIC-BOOK** THEY BASED ON US.

HA. I'VE NOT SEEN THIS BEFORE. IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE ME?

PRESUMABLY. PLUS ME, FIFTY POUNDS AGO.

ENGLAND'S BRAND NEW SUPER CLUB!
SEVEN STARS
1/-

PROJECT SEVEN STARS
EYES ONLY

THAT'S ODD. SOMEBODY CALLED **MURRAY'S** UPDATED THESE DOCUMENTS.

PERHAPS THAT'S VULL'S REAL NAME?

I THOUGHT VULL **WAS** HIS REAL NAME.

HERE, LISTEN-- ACCORDING TO THIS, **ZOM** WAS DISCORPORATED IN 1966 BY THE DUKE **DE RICHLEAU.**

AND DAVID GAUNT, THE **FLASH AVENGER,** DIED OF LUNG CANCER IN 1968.

OBITUARY
ZOM
VULL
DAVID GAUNT

SO, OTHER THAN VULL HIMSELF, THAT ONLY LEAVES JIM AND CAROL...

...AND US.

WE'RE ZITZED, AREN'T WE? WE HAVE TO FIND **VULL.**

WE NEED TO SEE THE INVISIBLE MAN.

CLASSIFIED REPORT

ANYTHING?

ALSO, I KNEW GETTING HERE TO AFRICA'S WEST COAST FROM **KOR** WOULD BE RELATIVELY **EASY.**

EVEN **YOU'RE** LOOKING YOUNGER SINCE KOR, INCIDENTALLY.

THAT'S JUST THE WEIGHT I GAINED IN HOSPITAL DISAPPEARING, THANKS TO AYESHA'S POOL.

NOT YET. SHE'S JUST TALKING TO THEM. THEY CLEARLY THINK SHE'S A DOCKSIDE **PROSTITUTE.**

HOW DID YOU KNOW THERE WAS A WORLD AQUANAUT SECURITY PATROL REFUELLING DEPOT HERE IN **NACUMERA?**

WELL, RUNNING M.I.5 HAD **COMPENSATIONS.**

HMM. I NOTICED AN OLD CYBERNAUT-INDUCED **SCAR** HAD GONE, AND...

HOLD ON...

DUGONG

HOLD ON, ONE OF THEM'S JUST GRABBED HER ARSE. SHE...

OW! OH, GOOD GOD, THERE'S NO NEED FOR...

ACTUALLY, WE'D BETTER GET **DOWN** THERE.

IS ORLANDO IN TROUBLE? WHAT'S...?

ORLANDO? SHE'S OVER THREE **THOUSAND,** I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE SHE'S KILLED, AND NEITHER DOES **SHE.**

NO, IT'S NOT ORLANDO WHO'S IN TROUBLE.

LANDO! DON'T...

OH, NEVER MIND.

...AND YOU'LL REPORT THAT YOUR **SHIP,** YOUR **RADIO** OPERATOR AND YOUR RIGHT **TESTICLE** WERE TAKEN BY PIRATES FROM **GENOTIA,** IS THAT **CLEAR?**

PEST

AAAAA! AAAAAA!

WHERE'S THE OTHER ONE?

WELL, **THAT** WENT SMOOTHLY.

AH, THEY DESERVED IT. THEY WERE JUST TELLING ME WHAT THEY DO TO TITANIAN FEMALES.

LET'S SWIPE THEIR TOY SUBMARINE AND GET OUT OF HERE.

CAN YOU OPERATE ONE OF THESE?

WELL, I WAS AN ACE PILOT IN WORLD WAR TWO. I EXPECT I'LL PICK IT UP AS I GO ALONG.

SO, WHICH WAY'S THE SOUTH PACIFIC?

OUGONG

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

AT M.I.5 HEADQUARTERS, THE NEW **M** RECEIVES A BRIEFING...

AND THIS FOOTAGE IS...≥HUHHHH≤...IS ALL YOU'VE FOUND IN... ≥HUHHHH≤...IN THREE MONTHS?

SMERSH MUST...≥HUHHH≤... MUST ***LOVE*** YOU.

W-WITH RESPECT, SIR, YOUR NEW REGIME TAKES SOME GETTING ***USED*** TO.

M-MANY OF OUR OPERATIVES FIND THE J-SERIES AGENTS YOU'VE APPOINTED AS YOUR PERSONAL STAFF SOMEWHAT, UM, SOMEWHAT ***INTIMIDATING.***

ZAGADKA

TYCHO

CLAVIUS

YOUR OPERATIVES ARE... ≥HUHHH≤...ARE EASILY INTIMIDATED.

THAT IS... ≥HUHHH≤...THAT IS WHY I NEED PEOPLE I CAN...≥HUHHH≤...I CAN ***DEPEND*** UPON.

NOW, WHAT'S THIS... ≥HUHHH≤...THIS NEW INFORMATION?

MORE TOMORROW.

F-1

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

THE NEW HEAD OF M.I.5 SEEKS AN OLD FLAME...

FOLLOWING THE PREVIOUS M'S DISAPPEARANCE, WE INTERROGATED TWO FEMALE FORMER AGENTS KNOWN TO BE ***ASSOCIATES*** OF MS. NIGHT.

THEY IMPLICATED A THIRD, NAMED GALE OR GALORE.

YES. I THINK... ≥HUHHH≤...THINK I BANGED HER ONCE.

UM... W-WELL, UNDER INTERROGATION SHE ADMITTED FLYING MS. NIGHT AND TWO OTHER WOMEN TO KAMPALA IN UGANDA.

ALL THOSE INTERROGATED DIED SHORTLY AFTERWARDS. ***SUICIDES,*** IT'S BELIEVED.

NIGHT'S IN...≥HUHHH≤... IN ***AFRICA,*** THEN?

W-WELL, WE DISCOVERED SOMETHING ***ELSE...***

FIND OUT WHAT IN TOMORROW'S ***BRUTE.***

F-2

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

AT VAUXHALL CROSS, M'S BRIEFING TURNS UP A **SURPRISE...**

FOLLOWING THE **AFRICA** LEAD, WE LOCATED SECURITY FOOTAGE FROM FREETOWN IN SIERRA LEONE SHOWING TOURISTS BOARDING A FERRY FOR **NACUMERA.**

THE WOMAN ON THE LEFT IS THE ALLEGED **JOURNALIST** WHO VISITED NIGHT BEFORE THE, UM, THE **INCIDENT.**

I CAN SEE THAT, BUT THE...≥HUHHHH≤...THE GIRL NEXT TO HER. IT'S...≥HUHHHH≤...IT'S **MURRAY.** I HUNTED HER DOWN IN...≥HUHHHH≤...IN **1958.**

ONLY HER **HAIR'S** DIFFERENT. AND...≥HUHHHH≤...AND THAT GIRL ON THE END, SHE'S...

DEAR GOD, IT'S **HER.** IT'S HER FIFTY...≥HUHHHH≤

FIFTY **YEARS** AGO!

WHAT NEXT? DON'T MISS TOMORROW'S EPISODE.

F-3

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

THE NEW M'S BRIEFING HAS REACHED AN UNEXPECTED **CONCLUSION...**

SO, ARE WE THINKING THAT NIGHT'S HAD COSMETIC **SURGERY?**

NOT UNLESS WE'RE **MORONS.** SHE...≥HUHHHH≤...SHE LOOKS AS SHE DID WHEN I **BEDDED** HER.

≥HUHHHH≤

THE FILES SHE TOOK RELATED TO...≥HUHHHH≤...TO MURRAY'S FANTASTICAL **LEAGUE.** SUPPOSE...≥HUHHHH≤...SUPPOSE ALL THAT NONSENSE WAS...≥HUHHHH≤... WAS ACTUALLY **TRUE?**

J-5, I WANT YOU TO...≥HUHHHH≤... TO REQUISITION A SPECTRUM **JET.**

WE'RE GOING TO **UGANDA.**

F-4

TO BE CONTINUED.

CAROL?

DANGER TO LIFE

RIP 'BUSTER' 1946-1947

CRAIG STREET

L.C. 1935-1973

SATIN. AND GARATH. I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU TWO SINCE YOU WENT ON THE RUN AFTER WE FOUGHT ***THE 'MASS.***

SORRY ABOUT THE FARADAY CAGE.

YOUR POWERS ***INCREASED,*** THEN?

YOU MEAN MY ILLNESS ***WORSENED--*** AFTER I'D ***STARTED*** MY CAREER BY ELECTROCUTING MY PET ***CAT!***

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

W-WE LEARNED YOUR WHEREABOUTS FROM FILES AT THE STAR CHAMBER IN LONDON.

OUR VISIT'S CONNECTED WITH THE REASON I ***CAME*** TO THIS ERA...

REALLY? YOU WEREN'T SO FORTHCOMING ABOUT THOSE REASONS BACK IN ***1964.***

YOU ONLY TOLD ***US*** YOU WERE AN INTERPLANETARY CRIMINAL FROM 3,000 A.D.

CLOSE ENOUGH.

CAROL, IN 2996 THE WORLD IS BARELY RECOVERING FROM A GREAT ***DISASTER.***

HUMANITY INHABITS AERIAL ***OVERCITIES,*** OR DOMED TOTALITARIAN ENVIRONMENTS LIKE ***WE.***

WE'RE STRAFED BY ALIEN ***WAR-FLEETS,*** AND EARTH'S RULED BY A MARS-BASED ***TYRANT.***

HISTORICALLY, THIS NIGHTMARE COMMENCED ***HERE,*** IN 2009 OR 2010.

THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL SOMEONE ***SOONER?***

C.A.S.-- CHRONONAUT AMNESIA SYNDROME, FROM MY ***TIME-JUMP.***

I--I RECOVERED MY LOST MEMORIES ONLY ***MONTHS*** AGO.

ACCORDING TO HER SEMIOTIC ***PROFILE,*** SATIN'S TELLING THE ***TRUTH,*** MS. FLANE.

I'M CONCERNED FOR MARS'S ***FUTURE.***

WE NEED YOUR HELP. WE NEED ***ELECTRO-GIRL.***

GARATH, I'M ***EIGHTY.*** SURELY I MUST BE ELECTRO***WOMAN*** BY NOW?

BESIDES, I'M RETIRED. I SURVIVE BY SELLING MY SURPLUS TO THE NATIONAL ***GRID.***

CAN YOU AT LEAST TELL US WHERE TO FIND ***VULL?***

ISN'T HE DEAD?

I SUPPOSE ***JIM*** MIGHT KNOW, WITH THAT COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF HIS.

HE WAS AT THE U.N., BUT THAT WAS ***DECADES*** AGO.

YOU MAY AS WELL FACE IT. THE SEVEN STARS, ONE BY ONE...

...WE'RE ALL GOING OUT.

SO WHERE ARE WE, EXACTLY?

THIS IS DRAKE'S PASSAGE, JUST OFF THE TIP OF **PATAGONIA.** I VISITED ONCE WITH **GULLIVER.**

ARE THESE AQUANAUT RATIONS **MERMAID** PASTE?

THE SHORE WE'RE PASSING... I THINK THAT'S PEPPER'S LAND.

PEPPER'S LAND?

YEAH, IT WAS A KIND OF MUSICAL UTOPIA DISCOVERED BY A NAVAL SERGEANT IN THE 1870S. TOOK A LOT OF DAMAGE DURING THE **FALKLANDS** WAR.

SOMETHING ELSE THAT HAPPENED DURING MY **ASYLUM** YEARS?

YES, I'M AFRAID SO. THE WORLD MOVED ON, DARLING, BUT IT DIDN'T GO ANY-WHERE **NICE.**

COME ON. IF WE WANT TO BE IN SIGHT OF THE RIALLARO ARCHIPELAGO BY SUNRISE, WE'D BETTER GET UNDERWAY.

I'LL STEER WHILE YOU TWO SLEEP, THEN EMMA CAN TAKE OVER.

2084

LANDO? WAKE UP, WE'RE **HERE.**

mwuh?

YES, WHEN YOU SAID WE'D BE IN SIGHT OF THE ARCHIPELAGO BY MORNING, YOU WEREN'T BEING STRICTLY **LITERAL,** WERE YOU?

NO. NO, I SUPPOSE NOT.

IT'S THE RIALLARO **FOGBANK.** I TRAVERSED IT ALONE IN A ROWBOAT THE FIRST TIME I CAME HERE.

I ENDED UP SHIPWRECKED AND NEARLY KILLED, BUT **STILL.**

SO WE JUST KEEP GOING, INTO THE MIST?

PRETTY MUCH.

THEN WE SEARCH THE ARCHIPELAGO FOR LINCOLN **ISLAND** AND HOPE JACK NEMO HASN'T **FORGOTTEN** US.

WE'RE NOT SURE OF MUCH, THEN.

WELL, WE'VE GOT NO INFORMATION ABOUT LINCOLN, NOR ANY IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, SO, YES...

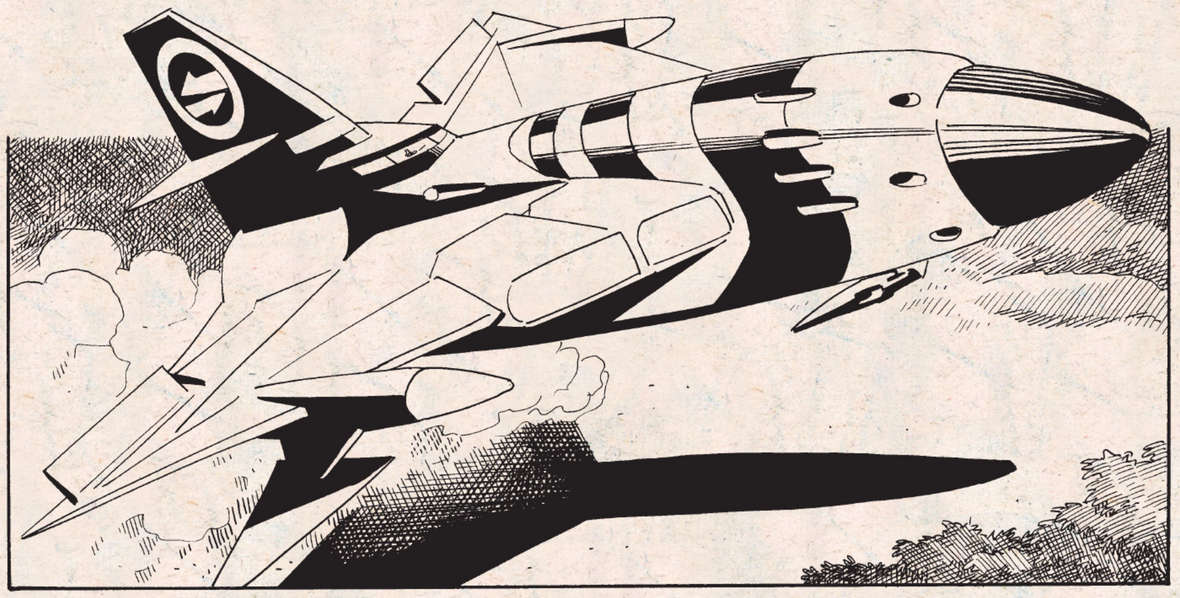
STRAIGHT AHEAD.

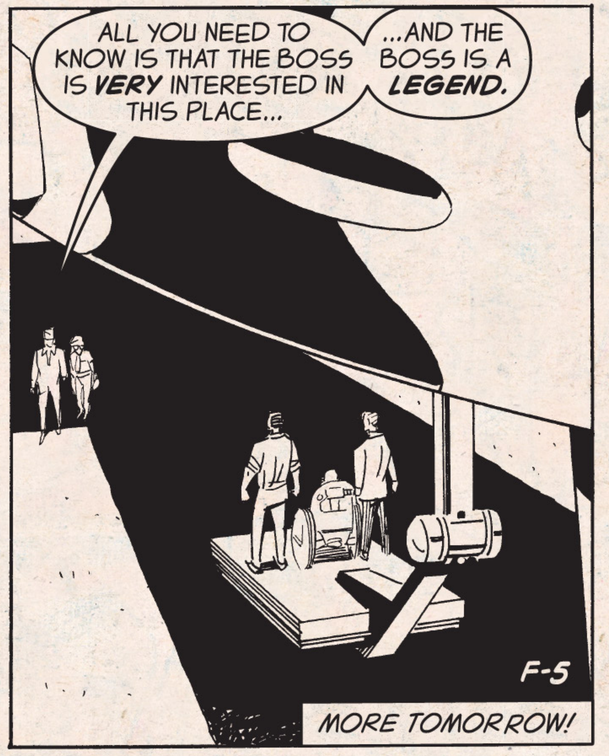
INTO THE FOG.

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

THE NEW M.I.5 HEAD'S JET TOUCHES DOWN IN A CLEARING EAST OF **KOR**...

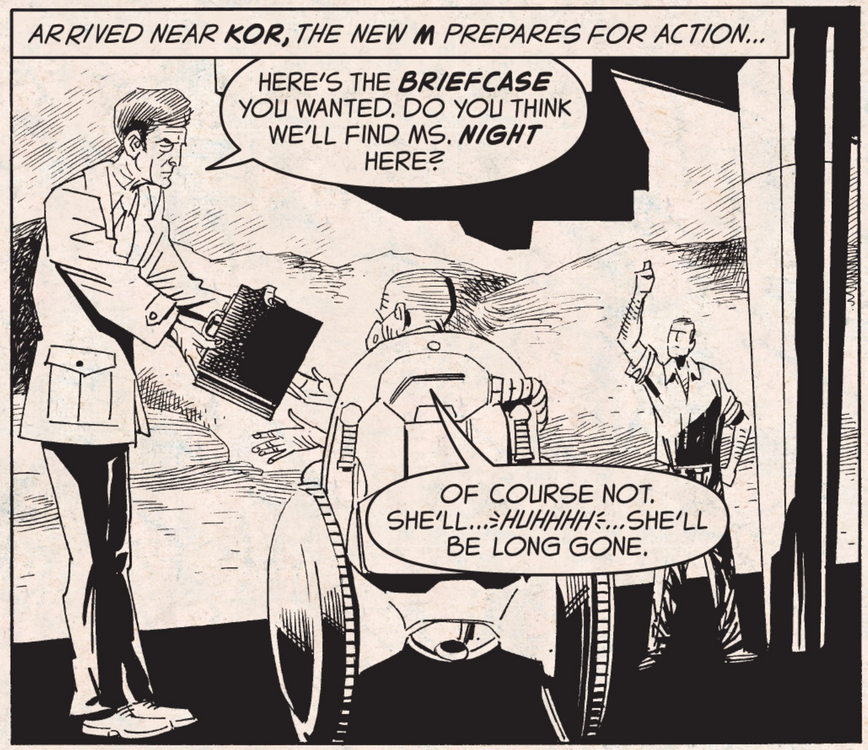


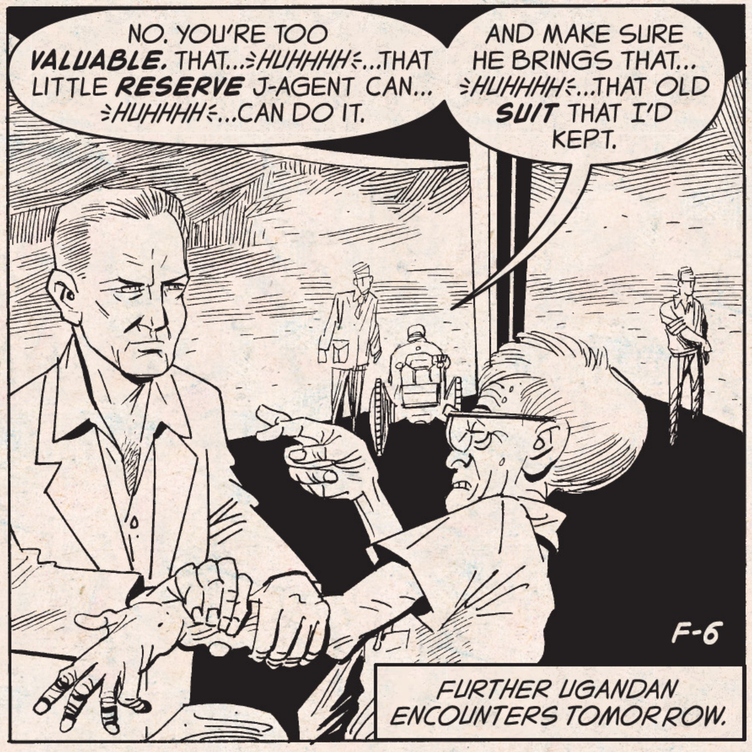


FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

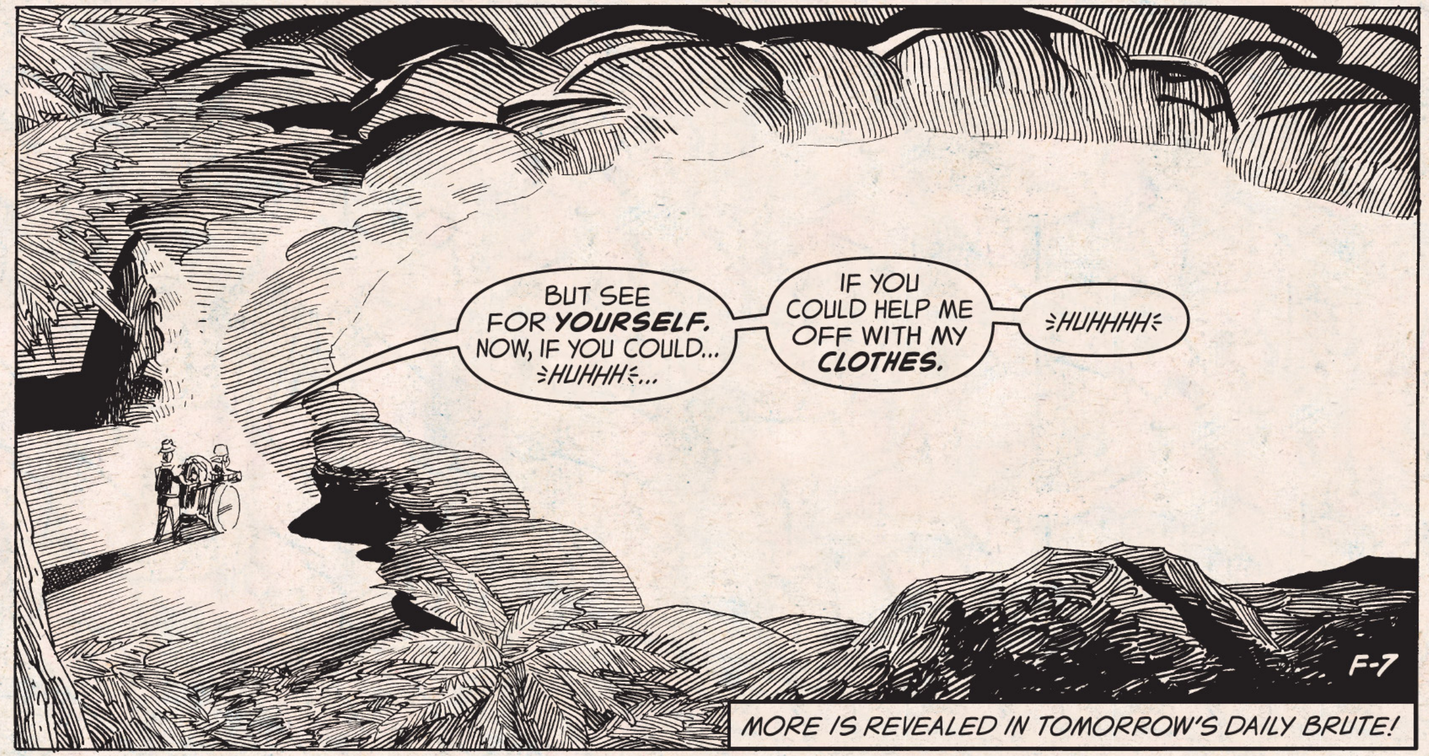
ARRIVED NEAR **KOR**, THE NEW **M** PREPARES FOR ACTION...





FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK



FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

Finally, a use for this notebook. Emerging into Riallaro, the first island we found was Spectralia, where the phantoms offered us no assistance.

B-BUT WHY, IN THIS CENTURY, WOULD GHOSTS FEAR A TEAM OF ***WOMEN?***

The disdainful pygmies of Coxuria simply ignored us, though Emma raised an interesting point.

WHY HASN'T ANYONE ***FOUND*** RIALLARO? SURELY, MODERN ***SATELLITES...***

THERE'S ***MOUNT ANALOGUE*** FURTHER NORTH. APPARENTLY IT BENDS THE REGION'S LIGHT ***AROUND*** IT.

Orlando wanted to ask directions in Figlefia, but I forbade it. Finding Lincoln is more important, and I know what she's like.

MINA, ASK YOURSELF: "HAVE I BEEN ANY ACTUAL ***FUN*** SINCE THE LATE ***1950s?***"

We sailed on, and I'm finally recognising some of the scenery. I'm starting to think things are going to work out just fine. More soon.

LINCOLN'S EITHER SLIGHTLY FURTHER NORTH, OR HE'S HAVING A STROKE.

Aleofane—it means 'Gem of Truth'—sounded promising. We were able to use our fame to buy information. Communication, however, was through facial tics.

Politically, things were tense in Fanattia. Half the population wanted to leave the archipelago while half wanted to wall off the island against immigrants.

US OUT NOW!

FANATTEXIT MEANS FANATTEXIT.

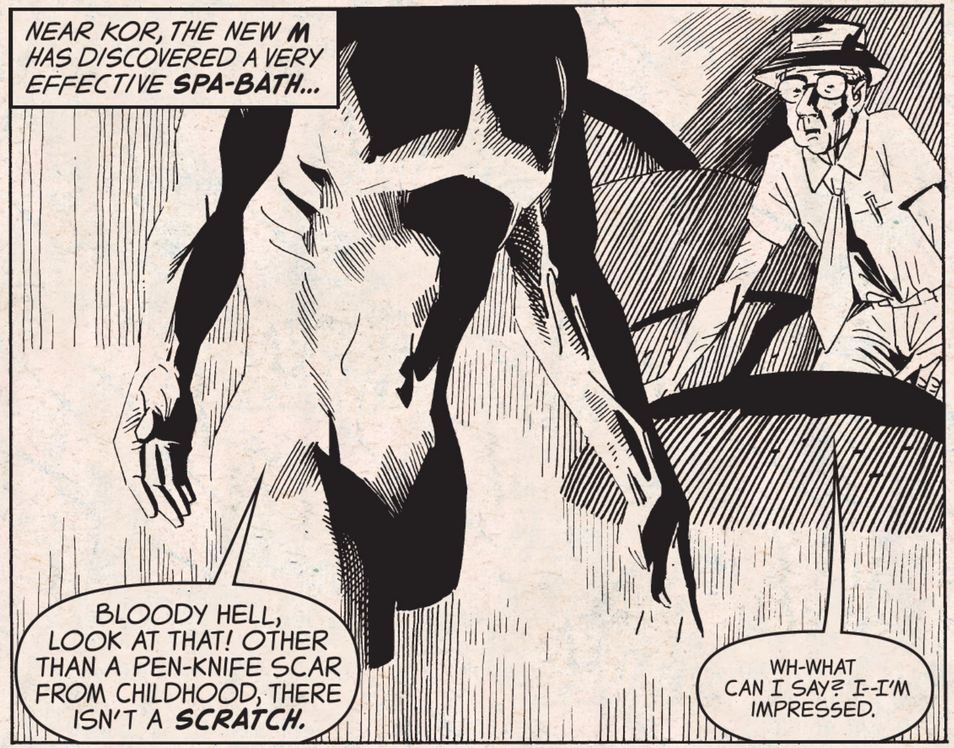
OUT!

IN!

Both policies seemed frankly impossible, but we got directions to Aleofane.

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK



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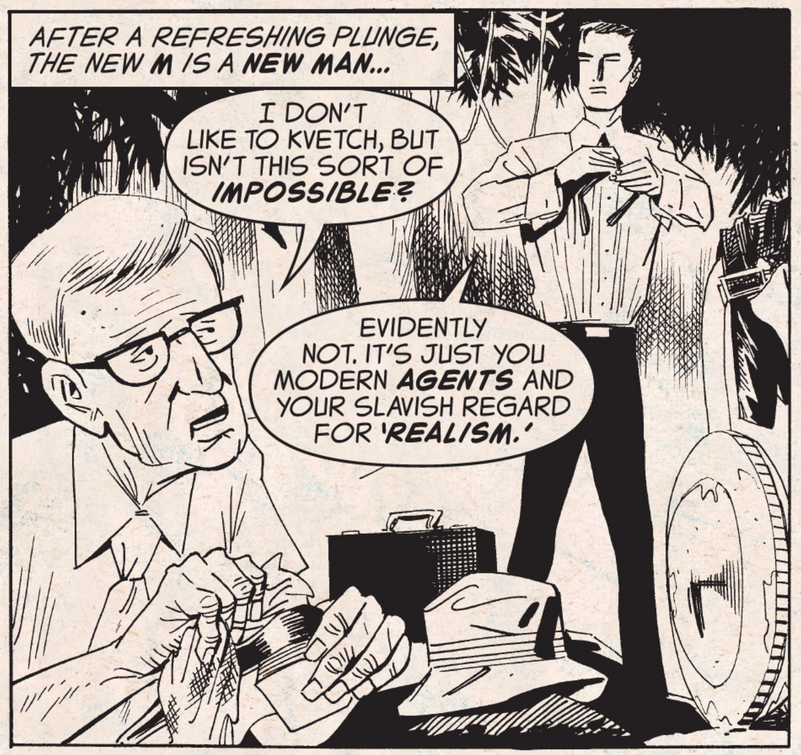
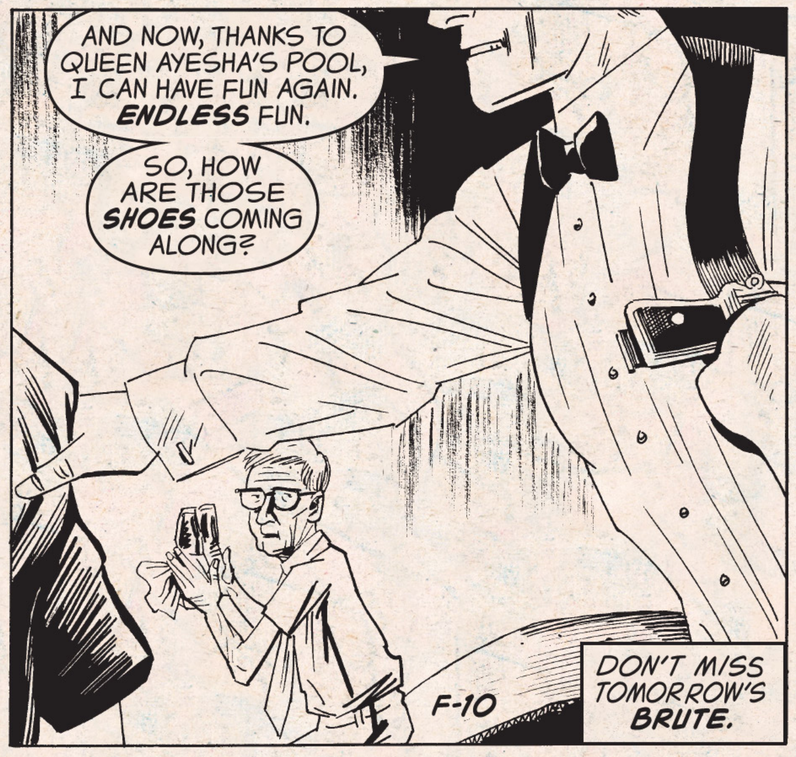




FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

NEAR KOR IN UGANDA, A FAMOUS OLD BRAND IS REVIVED...

THERE! BOY, YOU LOOK GOOD AS NEW. YOU KNOW, IN JAPAN THEY CALL YOU MR. KISS-KISS BANG-BANG?

O-ON ACCOUNT OF THE KISSING A-AND...

YES, YES. ABSOLUTELY FASCINATING.

TELL YOU WHAT, I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU COULD STAY WHERE YOU ARE FOR A MOMENT, COULD YOU?

UH, WELL, Y-YEAH, SURE. BUT WHY DO YOU WANT ME TO--

F-11

MORE TOMORROW.

FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK

JUST OUTSIDE KOR THERE IS A NEW LEASE ON LIFE...AND **DEATH!**

59:47

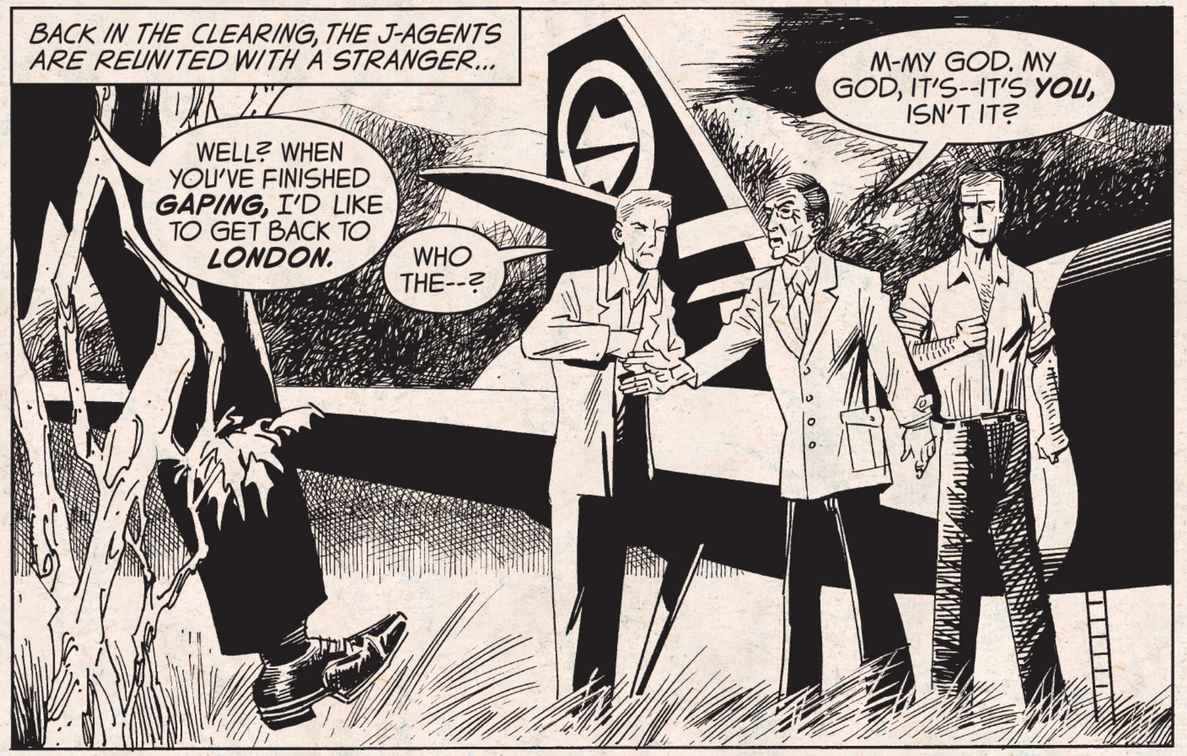
59:32

F-12

ANOTHER NAIL-BITING EPISODE IN TOMORROW'S DAILY BRUTE!

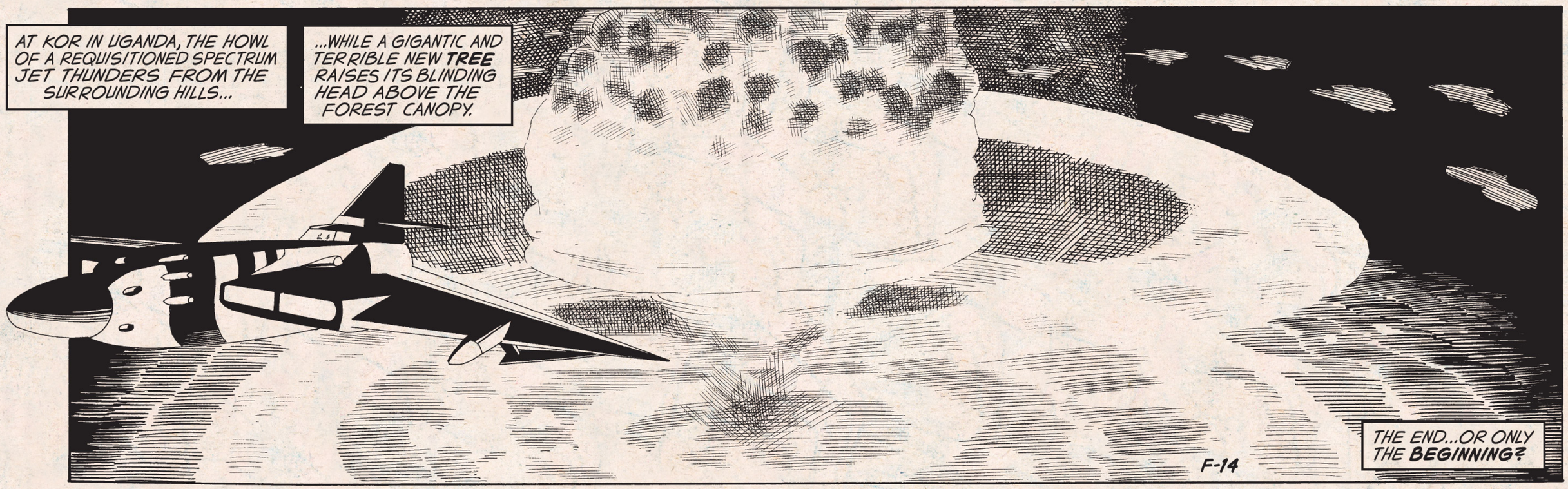
FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK



FAREWELLS AREN'T FOREVER

BY NOVEK



MMMAAAAH!

WHAT'S UP? HAVE A BAD DREAM?

I-IT WASN'T EVEN A ***DREAM.*** I--I JUST HEARD THIS... THIS DEAFENING ***NOISE...***

ARE WE NEAR ***LINCOLN*** YET?

WE'RE PRETTY CLOSE.

I THOUGHT IT WAS BETTER TO MAKE A ***SUBSURFACE*** APPROACH, RATHER THAN RISK GETTING SHELLED FROM A DISTANCE BY MISTAKE.

MM. AND A CRAFT THIS SMALL ISN'T GOING TO SHOW UP ON ***RADAR.***

FROM AN M.I.5 PERSPECTIVE, WE SHOULD BE COMPLETELY ***UNDETECT-ABLE.***

LET'S HOPE SO. MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ***NEMO*** DYNASTY HAS ***FLUCTUATED*** ACROSS THE GENERATIONS. I'VE...

HOLD ON. THIS BIG ***ROCK*** ON SONAR. IT'S ***MOVING.***

A-ALL THE FISH ARE HEADING THE OTHER ***WAY.***

PERHAPS IT'S, I DON'T KNOW, A BABY ***WHALE*** OR SOME-THING?

WH-WHAT'S THAT ***AHEAD?*** ALL THAT ***SEDIMENT...***

AAAAAAAA!

NEXT ISSUE: HANG ON TO YOUR HATS, HEARTS, AND HAND-HELD DEVICES, READERS! OUR TERRIFIC NEW 21st CENTURY COMIC SERIAL IS ONLY JUST GETTING **STARTED!**

RISKY COMICS Ltd.

ENGLAND'S BRAND NEW SUPER-CLUB!

MONTHLY

SEVEN STARS

1/-

Nº1

THE 'MASS IS ABSORBING EVERYTHING MY SEVEN STARS **THROW** AT IT...AND MY **INVISIBILITY** IS **USELESS!**

TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME: | CAPTAIN UNIVERSE · MARSMAN · SATIN ASTRO VULL · FLASH AVENGER · ZOM · ELECTRO GIRL

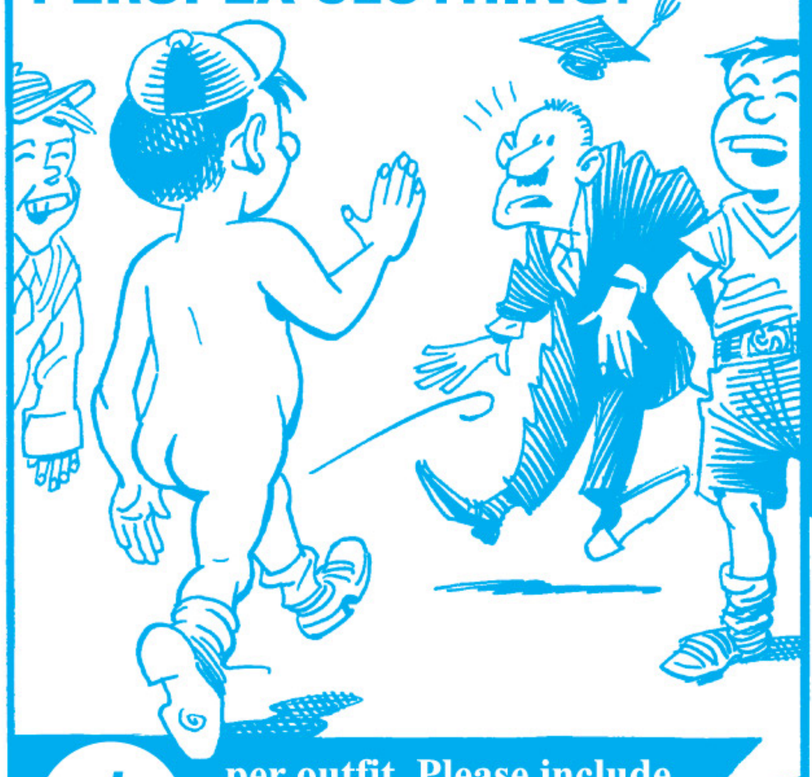
3D 9D 6D 1/-

H.C. EDWARDS POCKET MONEY ARCADE

1/6 2/- 1/3 2/6 Tops!

Is that really your body they can see through your clothes? Make your friends think they have X-Ray eyes with our

PERSPEX CLOTHING!



1/6 per outfit. Please include measurements with order. *Post and Pkg. 1/3*

KIDS! Be an AQUANAUT with our POLYTHENE BAG DIVING HELMET!

Works like a real diving helmet for an extremely limited period of time. **3D** each or **1/-** for a family pack. *Post and Pkg. 4d - 8d*

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Fool your parents, teachers and local constabulary into thinking you're smoking a fake marijuana jazz cigarette when it's actually a REAL one!

5D each, 5 for 2/6

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MYSTERY BOX!

The surprise of your life! And at least you'll have a box! **2/-** *Post and Pkg. 6d*

PRINT REAL -looking MONEY at home with the 'Little Rascal' JUNIOR COUNTERFEITERS KIT!

But don't tell anyone. **2/-** only. No duds. *Post and Pkg. 8d*

Earn the immediate respect of shop-keepers and bank-clerks with

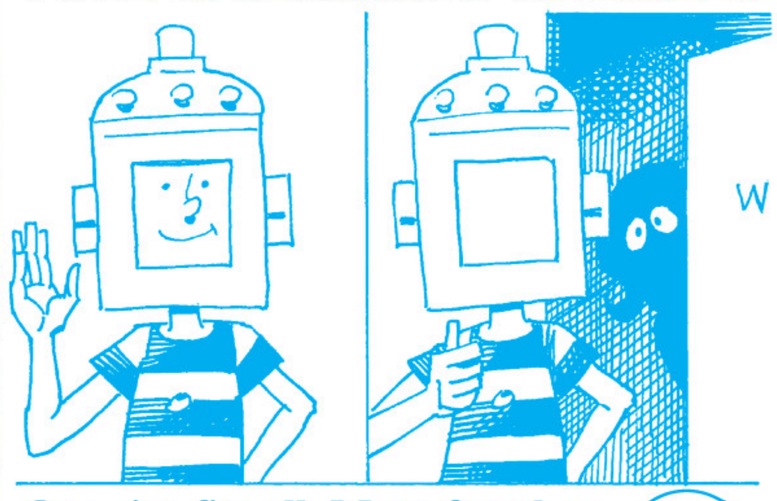
'I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NOT A LUGER!'

2/6* Ammo on request. *Post and Pkg. by arrangement

*Earn back in a moment!

Make your head disappear like VULL THE INVISIBLE with your very own

VULL VANISHING HELMET!



One size fits all. More fun than your head has any right to have! No returns. **6D** *Post and Pkg.6d*

Taking a walk in the park? Looking for a new, exciting hobby? Then you need this helpful new field manual!

The Observer's GUIDE to Under-the-bush TRAGIC EROTICA

1/- Include 'signed' permission note from parent or guardian. *Post and Pkg. 6d*

TRACKSIDE TIPS!

Do you know your pony from your monkey, your horse from your elbow? NO? Then learn the art of the GEE-GEES from HARRY HACKETT, trackside authority and nabob of nags. Learn: Passing for 21 with a demob suit and false moustache. Betting a certainty when bust. Tic-tac for the layman and much, much MORE! Go on a tanner each way gets you QUIDS IN, my son! Take it from me!

6D per copy, 2 for 1/3d. *Post and Pkg. 4½d or 1/-*

Turn that abandoned refrigerator into a CLUBHOUSE with our official-looking KEEP OUT and DO NOT DISTURB decals!

3D each, both for 6d. *Post and Pkg. 4d - 8d*

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START SPENDING TODAY!

TURN CASH TO FLASH!

SEVEN STARS

BLIGHTY'S BOLDEST SUPER-CHUMS!

MARSMAN

SATIN

VULL

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE

ELECTRO GIRL

ZOM

FLASH AVENGER

WHO ARE THESE MIGHTY CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE, AND WHAT HAS BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER? FIND OUT IN CHAPTER ONE:

"The COMING of the SEVEN STARS!"

AT THEIR HEADQUARTERS IN LONDON'S LITTLE MONMOUTH STREET, THE HEROES ASSEMBLE FOR THE FIRST TIME...

I, **VULL THE INVISIBLE,** CALL THIS MEETING TO **ORDER!** SINCE RECENTLY ANNOUNCING OUR EXISTENCE, THERE HAVE BEEN **DEVELOPMENTS--**

HOLD ON...

...WHO MADE **VULL** OUR LEADER? WE'VE NEVER **SEEN** HIM AND ALL WE HEAR IS THAT CRACKLY ELECTRIC **VOICE!**

BESIDES, WASN'T VULL "THE CROOK WHO HELD THE WORLD TO RANSOM"?

LECTRO GIRL

SILENTLY, VULL RECALLS A MURKY PAST...

YOU MAY AS WELL GIVE UP, VULL. I KNOW YOU'RE HERE AND I KNOW MY SHOT DIDN'T **MISS.**

YOU'RE LEAVING A TRAIL OF **EVIDENCE** BEHIND YOU.

C-CURSE YOU, WHOEVER YOU ARE! TH-THIS SHOULDN'T BE HAPPENING!

I--I THOUGHT I HAD YOU TRAPPED AND HELPLESS LIKE THE OTHERS, THEN YOU MADE YOUR LUCKY **SHOT...**

THAT WASN'T LUCK, VULL, IT WAS INFRA-RED GOGGLES.

THEY'RE NOT WIDELY AVAILABLE YET, UNLESS YOU'RE A GOVERNMENT **AGENT.**

S-SO **YOU** WERE HUNTING **ME.** B-BUT...=>COUGH=<... **WHY?**

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU WERE REALLY DEAD, BUT I HAVE MY **OWN** REASONS.

ONE DAY I MIGHT USE YOUR HELMET FOR SOMETHING OTHER THAN **TYRANNY.**

B-BUT THIS ISN'T **RIGHT.**

GOGGLES OR NO GOGGLES, YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN TERRIFIED OF ME, A FRAIL...=>COUGH=<...FRAIL YOUNG THING LIKE YOU.

I'M NEITHER AS FRAIL NOR AS YOUNG AS YOU **SUPPOSE,** HENRIK VULL...

...AND YOU'RE NOT MY FIRST **INVISIBLE MAN.**

IN THE STAR CHAMBER'S JET-AGE CONFINES, AFTER A MOMENT'S REFLECTION, VULL REPLIES TO CAROL (ELECTROGIRL) FLANE'S ACCUSATION.

I AM **SUCCESSOR** TO THIS MANTLE, AND UNLIKE THE **FIRST** VULL, MY INTENTIONS ARE **HONOURABLE.**

MY COSMIC AWARENESS CONFIRMS THAT HE'S TELLING THE **TRUTH!**

THANK YOU. NOW, AS I WAS SAYING, SINCE OUR **ANNOUNCEMENT,** EVENTS HAVE OCCURRED.

MOST NOTABLY, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE FORMED A **RIVAL** TEAM, "THE VICTORY VANGUARD."

CRIKEY! ISN'T ONE ENGLISH SUPER-SQUAD ENOUGH, DONCHA KNOW?

APPARENTLY NOT, FLASH AVENGER. BESIDES, OUR TEAM IS AFFILIATED WITH THE **UNITED NATIONS** THROUGH **ME.**

WITH THESE REPORTED **AMERICAN** SUPER-COMBOS, BRITAIN PROBABLY WANTED ONE OF ITS **OWN.**

I'VE MORE INFORMATION ON THE VANGUARD HERE...

TOP SECRET

...THEIR MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES **ACE HART,** MARK **TYME,** THE PURPLE **HOOD,** TOMMY **WALLS...**

HART I'VE HEARD OF, BUT NOBODY ELSE.

SILVER

ACE HART

WHO'S THE PURPLE HOOD?

OH, HE'S JUST SOME GHASTLY **THUG** WITH A **MACHINE-GUN.**

OTHER MEMBERS ARE CRASH **BRITTANUS,** MR. **APOLLO,** SWIFT **MORGAN** AND MORGAN'S FEMALE ASSISTANT **SILVER.**

I DON'T HAVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF **EVERYBODY...**

HMM. HART'S FORMIDABLE, BUT THESE **OTHERS...**

IT'S AS IF THEY'VE ENLISTED ANYONE WHO WAS **AVAILABLE.**

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN. WASN'T THIS **MR. APOLLO** REDUCED TO ADVERTISING **BODY-BUILDING** COURSES?

I SUPPOSE AFTER **OUR** GROUP, THERE WERE ONLY THESE **LEFTOVERS.**

ZOM SENSES GREAT **SPIRIT** IN THIS **TOMMY WALLS...**

MAYBE SO. BUT HE'S CALLED **TOMMY WALLS.** THESE PEOPLE SOUND MORE LIKE **ADVERTISING** MASCOTS THAN SUPER-ADVENTURERS.

=CHOKE= YOU **MONSTERS!** TOMMY WALLS WAS THE **BRAVEST** OF US, YET YOU **BELITTLE** HIM!

YOU **DESERVE** TO PERISH!

THAT'S WHY I'VE RETURNED TO YOUR FIRST-EVER **MEETING** TO PREVENT YOU FROM **FORMING!**

THAT WAY, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO STEAL WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN **OUR** VICTORY OVER **THE 'MASS** AND TURN IT TO YOUR OWN--

YEEARRGH!

ZZIZZAP!

I **SAY!**

WHO THE BALLY HECK WAS **THAT?**

ZOM KNOWS NOT, SAVE THAT THIS MORTAL HAS PASSED INTO THE DARK REALM OF...**THE ZODIAC!**

DASH IT ALL! THEN WE'VE A **BODY** TO DISPOSE OF! POOR SHOW!

FEAR NOT! MY ZODIACAL **POWERS** CAN CHANGE HUMAN BEINGS INTO ANY FORM I **PLEASE...** SUCH AS ONE OF YOUR EARTHLY **JUKE-BOXES!**

HE SEEMED CONNECTED TO THAT **GOVERNMENT** GROUP. BUT WHY WOULD HE WANT TO **KILL** US?

YOU'RE JUMPING TO **CONCLU-SIONS!**

I DON'T BELIEVE FOR A MOMENT THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD TRY TO **ASSASSINATE** US!

WITH RESPECT, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE, THAT WASN'T MY EXPERIENCE ARRIVING FROM **MARS...**

THIS WAS THE LATE **1940s.** THE TYRRANICAL **BIG BROTHER** REGIME CONTROLLED BRITAIN.

MARSMAN RECOUNTS HIS TALE...

"I WAS BORN **GARATH GANZZ** IN NEW VARNAL TO A THARK FATHER AND A SO-CALLED 'RED MARTIAN' MOTHER. WE HYBRIDS OFTEN HAD SPECIAL POWERS."

LOOK! HE'S **TALENTED!**

BUT NOT **GREEN.** THAT'LL COUNT AGAINST HIM.

"MARS HAD COLOUR-BARRIERS BACK THEN. LUCKILY MY ABILITIES SECURED ME A JOB WITH INTELLIGENCE, REPORTING FROM POST-WAR **EARTH.**"

INTERPLANETARY INTELLIGENCE, EH? YOU SHOULD BOARD THE **GULLIVAR JONES.**

HALT

I'M AFRAID **PINKS** TRAVEL THIRD CLASS.

"THIS WAS YOUR EARTH YEAR **1948.** APPROACHING CUSTOMS AT BIRMINGHAM SPACEPORT, I REALIZED SOMETHING WAS **WRONG...**"

COLOURED ALIENS WITH US, DOUBLEPLUS QUICK!

"FORTUNATELY MY PSI-SKILLS PREVENTED MY **ARREST.**"

YOU'RE MISTAKEN. I'M A FELLOW OFFICER. "PLUSGOOD WORK. CARRY ON, CONSTABLE."

UH... PLUSGOOD WORK. CARRY ON, CONSTABLE.

"NEWLY ELECTED, THE BIG BROTHER REGIME WAS **UNEXPECTED.** AS MARSMAN I EVADED CAPTURE THOSE NEXT EIGHT YEARS.

"OTHER EXTRATERRESTRIALS SUFFERED DETENTION AND **EXTERMINATION.**"

MARSMAN CONCLUDES HIS ACCOUNT...

THAT REGIME FELL LESS THAN A DECADE AGO. MANY OF THE SAME OFFICIALS ARE STILL IN **POWER.**

HMM. PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT.

LET'S **VISIT** THIS "VICTORY VANGUARD." WE'LL EXIT VIA **NIGHTMORE STREET...**

AND SO...

PERHAPS WE'LL LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR MYSTERIOUS LATE **ASSAILANT...** AND WHAT HE MEANT BY **"THE 'MASS!"**

LEAVING THEIR BASE BY JETPACK, FLASH-PLANE OR THEIR OWN POWER, THE SEVEN STARS ZOOM INTO ACTION!

MEANWHILE, AT THE TOP SECRET H.Q. OF BRITAIN'S **SPYMASTERS,** SHADOWY **SECRETS** ARE DISCUSSED...

YOU KNOW, GEORGE, I SUSPECT WE'VE MADE A ROD FOR OUR OWN BACKS WITH JOHNNY **SUPERHERO.**

H-HOW DO YOU MEAN, M?

BASICALLY, WHEN WE ACTIVATED THE **MURRAY** GROUP IN 1898 WE STARTED A **PRODIGY RACE.**

THE FRENCH AND GERMANS FIELDED **THEIR** RESPECTIVE TEAMS, THEN, AROUND 1920, AMERICA BELATEDLY COMMENCED ITS **OWN** PROGRAM.

TODAY, THOUGH POSSIBLY AIDED BY HOLLYWOOD SPECIAL **EFFECTS,** AMERICA LEADS THE **WORLD...**

...AND FOLLOWING THIS **U.N.** GROUP, IT'S **US** PLAYING **CATCH-UP!**

W-WELL, OUR **VICTORY VANGUARD** SEEMS PROMISING...

HARDLY. **HART'S** THE ONLY FIRST-RATER. OTHERWISE, THEY'RE THE DREGS OF SUPERHUMANITY AND LACK **PROPAGANDA** VALUE.

SNAKES and LADDERS

I MEAN, AN ICE CREAM-FUELLED TEENAGER WHOSE **POWER** MUST PRESUMABLY BE **DIABETES?**

ENTER

NO UNAUTHORISED PERSONNEL BEYOND THIS POINT

NO. WE NEED SOMETHING **SPECTACULAR** TO LAUNCH THIS PROJECT.

KEEP CLOSED AT ALL TIMES

SOMETHING TO SEIZE THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION AND MAKE THESE "SEVEN STARS" LOOK LIKE **ALSO-RANS.**

LUCKILY, WE'VE RETAINED SOMETHING FROM **1953** THAT MIGHT SERVE OUR PURPOSES.

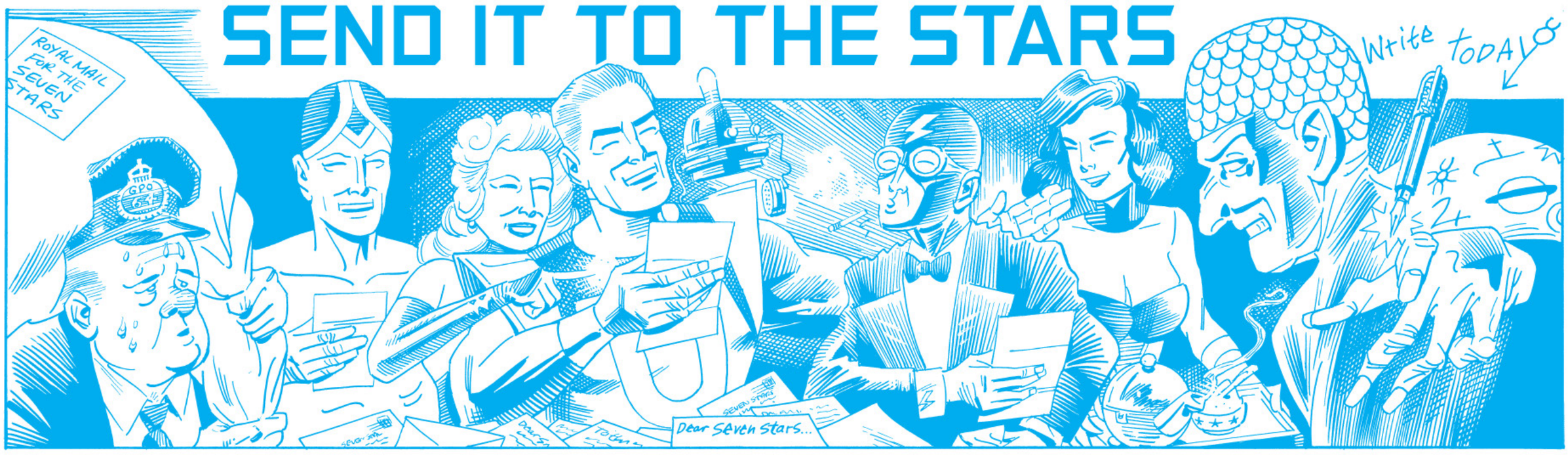
G-GOOD **LORD!** D-DO OUR **TEST SUBJECTS** KNOW ABOUT THIS?

HEAVENS, NO.

IF THEY **DID,** I IMAGINE THEY MIGHT DEMAND SOMETHING MORE SUBSTANTIAL THAN **ICE-CREAM.**

WHAT IS THE SPY-CHIEF'S TERRIBLE **SECRET?** LEARN MORE IN THE NEXT CHAPTER OF OUR GREAT SIX-PART **NOVEL!**

SEND IT TO THE STARS



We look forward to receiving your electronic mail! Send it here: tothestars@knockabout.com

What-Ho, readers! It's your curmudgeonly cartoon-strip commissars Al and Kev here, crouching in our combined utility closet and office amid a much bigger professional publishing concern that has fortunately forgotten our existence. Despite all our cheery and alliterative bluster, we're unhappy alcoholics who have very few friends of our own age, so any day that starts with a lilting letter from one of our rollicking readers is another day where we don't put a long-arm stapler to our temples and depress the plunger. And in that spirit, welcome to our first ever scintillating Seven Stars letters page! Without further ado, let's see what's on the minds of all you salivating Seven Stars supporters out there!

Dear Al and Kev: My American pen pal Chuck is visiting and asked for a go of my "headlight comics"? Confused but happy to oblige I gave him some British picture weeklies with a strong selection of motoring strips. Despite the Bristol drop-heads and Ford Escorts none seemed to quench his desire. He was more entertained by my copy of Seven Stars, claiming it came close to the comics he had in Chicago. He had some with him but my dad thought they were just a load of Muscle Mary nonsense and my pen pal might be a hoarse bandit – but he seems honest enough. Keep up the good work, and Chuck says "More Satin and less spelling things funny". Peter Thicket, Salisbury

Well, Peter, our old China, you've certainly set us a poser there! By "headlights", could Chuck be thinking about those occasions when, for example, Zom of the Zodiac has the idea of changing somebody into a trouser-press and we see a little lightbulb floating above his head? That would be a sort of "head-light", wouldn't it? Or then again, he might mean tits.

Dear Al and Kev: Time travel – really!!! My brain hurts simply subtracting me long devotion and learning French herbs and grama. Can we just have costumed punch-ups and fewer or better still NO GIRLS? After a long day at school I don't want to be reading MORE homework, unless it's proper crime stuff that shows how to rob people and not get caught, like in my Uncle Ted's old comics from the army. 'Cocky' Bevan, Lewisham, London

Cocky, while we of course sympathise with your yearning for more flamboyantly-dressed all-male violence, we have friends in Lewisham who inform us that you are in fact a 57-year-old lecturer at the London School of Economics. Please don't write to us again.

Dear Editor: As a schoolmaster of 30 years' experience, I must protest about this Seven Stars Yankee-style Comic Cuts rubbish being proffered to impressionable British youth. Confound it, sir, do you have little or NO shame? We died in the war to stem this flow of might-is-right trash – there! Now look what you made me do: "trash", indeed. I meant foul transatlantic garbage. Aagh! Damn you, sir. I am infected like Al Capone's gusset. My M.P. shall be alerted to your publication, and legal action may follow.
Abraham Crockett (Ret.), Andover

Blimey O'Reilly! Steady on, Mr. Crockett, or you'll burst a blood vessel! (Seriously, though, sir, we assure you that these are wholesome British characters, thematically copied and in some instances actually traced from despicable American sources. If we sometimes put a spurious price of ten cents on the cover, this is only to convince our barely-literate underclass readership that they are buying a competently-crafted imported U.S. comic-book title rather than a shoddy sixpenny knock-off printed in black and white on toilet paper. Therefore the only message in our harmless periodicals is that BRITISH might is right, even if it has to dress up as an American. As for legal action, since we're already facing extradition and the death penalty in Texas over our recent Captain Marvellous publication, frankly, chum, you can do your worst.)

Dear Al and Kev: I look up to the Flash Avenger because he seems posh, but I am frightened of Zom. What is Zom? Is he a ghost, or a Dracula, or something even worse? What scares me most, even more than when he turns people into tractors or small regional lending-libraries, is the way that he always pauses before he says "…of the Zodiac!" Why does he do this? Sometimes he comes into my dreams, and starts what seems to be a casual conversation, like for example, "Hello, Halliburton. I was just thumbing through this newspaper to see what horoscope predictions had been made for the different signs…", and then he pauses and just looks at me, and I know what he's going to say, and the pause just goes on and on – sometimes I even have another dream during the pause – and the tension gets worse and worse, and then he says, "…of the Zodiac!", and I wake up screaming. Honestly, Al and Kev, I'm a bag of nerves. Please answer my questions about Zom before I do something desperate. Halliburton Shrewsbury, Shrewsbury

Your piteous puzzler had us stumped, Halliburton, so we decided to ask Zom himself – who is a real person and who says he vividly remembers the so-called "dream" occasions that you mention – the next time he called at our titanic Tempest Comics offices to collect his royalty cheque. He seemed either sad, sardonically amused or possibly furious, and said "Tell the mortal Shrewsbury that it is not for him to fathom the timeless enigmas…"

Anyway, that's all of your captivating comments that we have room for this issue. Keep those cards and envelopes coming in, and we'll see you next time! Ta-ta from your pesky pals –

"…of the Zodiac!"

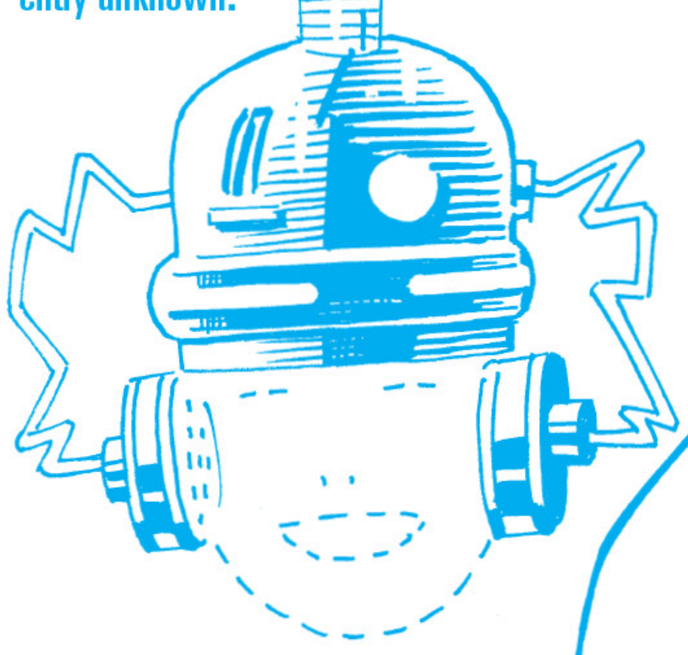
Al and Kev

VULL'S VAULT OF VITAL STATISTICS No. 1:

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE

Crossing the Galaxy at a Galap!

Welcome, Readers, to the files I secretly keep on my friends and co-workers. We start with CAPTAIN UNIVERSE, U.N. astrophysicist JAMES LOGAN, brother of interplanetary adventurer JET "ACE" LOGAN. Created by British workhorse MICK ANGLO, in 1954 Jim Logan was transformed by science-immortals into Captain Universe, super-marvel King of the Spaceways. In 1959, battling American superhuman STARDUST THE SPACE WIZARD, Captain Universe succeeded in killing his freakish rival and commandeering Stardust's headquarters — a hollow artificial sun — as his own. In 1964 he was affiliated with the United Nations super-team THE SEVEN STARS, retiring later that same year for reasons presently unknown.



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TEMPEST TV 2010

ADVENTURES IN THE PRESENT CENTURY

EVERY ORBIT

No. 2 UNIVERSAL EDITION DATELINE: August 22, 2018

ALAN MOORE
IN BAD LANGUAGE INCIDENT

KEVIN O'NEILL
FORGED ARTISTIC LICENSE

Formerly respected funsters turned comic book cosh-boys in brutal attack on confused and elderly institution that loved them like a mother. **More evidence inside.**

DUGONG MISSING!

ICONIC SUB FEARED LOST

After surviving encounters with Titanian Terror-craft, the famed Aquanaut Security Patrol Mk.4 vessel is believed to have fallen into the hands of Genotian pirates, following a raid on a refuelling depot in Nacumera. **For full graphic report, see inside.**

BANDITS BEST BELLAMY!
See inside front cover.

MINA MURRAY NOT DEAD!

WEST AFRICA, MONDAY: British Intelligence have released the attached image of a woman captured on security cameras, believing it to be Victorian adventuress WILHELMINA MURRAY, previously presumed to have died in the mid-1940s. **MORE INSIDE.**

News in Brief

- **Giant humanoid seen on ocean bed may be aqua-yeti.**
- **New MI5 chief is 'old head on young shoulders,' says Russian embassy source.**
- **SPECTRUM to deploy nuclear sub in Arctic circle?**

STOP PRESS!
JACK NEMO: Lying low after the 2009 standoff over Kashmir, Intelligence Services believe top global science-pirate Prince Dakkar to be refitting his notorious stealth-submersible *The Nautilus*.

A League LOOK-AND-LAMENT Feature: CHEATED CHAMPIONS OF YOUR CHILDHOOD

No. 2: FRANK BELLAMY

How do, you 'orrible lot! It's your Fuhrers of Fun Al and Kev here, still trapped as pseudo-American cockneys in a parodic travesty of the 1960s which we hadn't really thought through and, frankly, wish we'd never started. Welcome to the spectacular second issue of your tolerance-trampling **TEMPEST** and another pugnacious profile of publishing's most pilfered paragons, with this month's maltreated majesty being none other than England's sultan of style, **Frank Bellamy.**

Frank Alfred Bellamy, the British comic world's most distinctive adventure illustrator, was born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, during 1917. Polishing his skills at local artist William Blamire's studio from age sixteen, Frank met future wife Nancy while stationed at Bishop Auckland during WWII, buying ridiculous amounts of toothpaste from the branch of Woolworths where she worked as an excuse to see her. They married in 1942 and Frank started illustration work for the *Kettering Evening Telegraph* before moving in 1953 to *Mickey Mouse Weekly,* followed rapidly by his work on King Arthur and Robin Hood for *Swift,* and then, in 1957, on that most celebrated and most middle-class of English weeklies, *The Eagle*.

Commencing with back-cover illustrated biographies — including Biblical King David and Winston Churchill, these doing much to establish Bellamy as a first-rate illustrator — before long he took over the prestigious Dan Dare feature from its recently-robbed creator, Frank Hampson. After a year, Bellamy transferred his talents to what would be perhaps his greatest works: in 'Fraser of Africa,' he indulged his passion for that continent to tremendous effect (he'd previously illustrated *League* stalwart Allan Quatermain in *King Solomon's Mines,* his work admired by painter Sir William Russell Flint), while in Frank's beautiful 'Heros the Spartan' he established a ground-breaking style that has been much imitated, albeit unacknowledged, by later comic creators dealing with that celebrated warrior race.

With *The Eagle*'s decline, he switched in 1965 to *TV Century 21,* based around Gerry and Sylvia Anderson's TV puppet shows, where he drew the luscious 'Thunderbirds' lead feature. In 1966 he contributed, memorably, to the 'Winged Avenger' episode of television's *The Avengers,* and in 1971 he took over *The Daily Mirror*'s 'Garth' newspaper strip from artist John Allard, electrifying the long-running narrative with his dazzling array of shading and lighting effects. Following his sudden death in 1976, it's alleged that Nancy Bellamy contacted the publishers who'd absorbed *The Eagle,* asking if some of Frank's artwork could be returned to cover her mounting expenses, only to be told, brutally, that there was nobody who would even recognise her husband's art — possibly because said art had been misappropriated and sold over the years by persons working in editorial or publishing, a not-unknown comic industry phenomenon. Frank Bellamy was among the greatest talents this medium ever produced, and whoever stole his work was stealing gold.

Stone the crows! Looks like we got out the wrong side of bed this morning, and no mistake! Join us here next time for more commemorative cartoon castigation from your aggressive amigos —

Al and Kev

ALAN (The Writer) MOORE
KEVIN (The Artist) O'NEILL
BEN (The Colourist) DIMAGMALIW
TODD (The Letterer) KLEIN
CHRIS (The U.S. Publisher) STAROS
TONY (The U.K. Co-Publisher) BENNETT
JOSH (The U.K. Co-Publisher) PALMANO

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ALEMBIC HOUSE, VAUXHALL, 2010.

DUM DIDDLUM DUM, DUM-DUM-DUM, DUM DIDDLUM DUM, DUM-DUM-DUM...

DUM DIDDLUM DUM, DUM--AH! HERE WE ARE.

OKAY, JANUARY 28th, 7:35 AM: AFTER VERIFYING AYESHA'S SUPPOSEDLY MYTHICAL ***POOL,*** I'M REVISITING ***ALL*** THE INCARNATIONS OF OUR "SPECIAL GROUP."

IF WE HAD THE SECRET OF ***IMMORTALITY*** UNDER OUR NOSES FOR OVER A CENTURY, WHO KNOWS WHAT ***ELSE*** THESE FREAKS HAVE BEEN KEEPING FROM US?

LET'S SEE...OUR MOST RECENT ATTEMPT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THIS "VICTORY VANGUARD" IN 1964, SUPER-CLOWNS IN TIGHTS, COPYING THE AMERICANS. IT ENDED DISASTROUSLY.

BEFORE THAT, IN 1946, WE HAD ***WARRALSON'S*** SQUADRON. THEIR ONLY ASSET WAS PETER BRADEY'S ***INVISIBILITY.***

BY 1947 THEY'D ***DISBANDED.***

THE LAST ***COMPETENT*** TEAM WE ASSEMBLED WAS MURRAY'S ***LEAGUE*** IN 1898.

IT'S LARGELY THEIR ***DEFECTION*** THAT'S CAUSED OUR SUBSEQUENT ***PROBLEMS.***

WARRALSON TEAM 6-1947

THE 18th-CENTURY ***GULLIVER*** GROUP PRECEDED MURRAY'S.

EARLIER STILL WERE ***PROSPERO'S MEN--*** THE ONLY FILE I HAVEN'T ***STUDIED*** YET.

William Samson Jr.

1947

'CRASH' BRITTANUS >BRITANUS< >BRITUNUS<?

Y'KNOW, READING THESE DOCUMENTS SUGGESTS THAT OUR WORLD IS ***INFESTED*** WITH SUPER-BEINGS AND MONSTERS.

PERHAPS IT ALWAYS ***HAS*** BEEN.

1610-1696

PROSPERO'S MEN

UTOPIA, THE SOUTH ATLANTIC, 1919.

MR. DANNER, I'M SORRY, BUT YER OUT O' TIME.

IT'S NOTHIN' PERSONAL.

NOTHING ***PERSONAL?***

I'D PLANNED A ***TRUE*** UTOPIA HERE! EVENTUALLY I COULD HAVE FOUND ***OTHERS*** LIKE ME!

:NNGUH:

AYE, WELL, THEY FOUND YOU FIRST.

A MR. ***SAVAGE*** WHO DOESN'T WANT COMPETITION FOR HIS SUPERHUMAN ***SON.***

AND SO HE SENDS A ***MERCENARY*** TO KILL MANKIND'S MUTANT ***SAVIOR?***

HE SENDS ***YOU*** TO DEFILE ***UTOPIA?***

AH, UTOPIA SULLIED ***ITSELF,*** STARTIN' THAT WAR WITH ***BROBDINGNAG.***

UTOPIA'S ***COLONIZERS*** INSTIGATED THAT CONFLICT! ***GIANTS,*** LIKE ***YOU!***

WELL, JOIN GARGANTUA IN ***EXTINCTION,*** MONSTER! THIS IS AN AGE OF ***LIGHTNING MEN,*** LIKE ***ME!***

AH, BALLOCKS...

:URNGH:

FRANKLY, AN AGE O' MEN LIKE YOU SOUNDS ***INTERMINABLE.***

HA! TO A DEGENERATE SUBHUMAN ***BRUTE,*** PERHAPS.

THAT'S WHY YOUR DINOSAUR KIND BELONGS IN THE ***PAST...***

...AND THE FUTURE BELONGS TO US PERFECTED ***HUMANS!***

:UNNFF:

THESE ARMS CAN CRUSH ***GRANITE,*** YOU ***THROW-BACK!***

WHAT ***ARE*** YOU, ANYWAY? SOME INBRED SPECIES OF ***OGRE?***

I'M A QUARTER ***GOD,*** YE CUNT.

LINCOLN ISLAND, THE SOUTH PACIFIC, 2010.

The TEMPEST

TWO: AND AN AGE OF GIANTS, ADIEU

OH MY GOD, MINA, WHAT ON EARTH IS...?

HAVEN'T A CLUE.

A-ALTHOUGH IT COULD HAVE ALREADY ***DROWNED*** US IF IT WANTED TO. PERHAPS IF WE DON'T ***ANTAGONIZE*** IT...

"IT"?

WELL, FAIRLY OBVIOUSLY, IT'S ANTAGONIZED ENOUGH ***ALREADY!*** TELL IT WHY YE'RE HERE, BEFORE IT FOCKIN' ***MURDERS*** YE!

W-WE'RE LOOKING FOR CAPTAIN ***NEMO...***

I KNOW THAT! YE'RE THE WATERY ARSEHOLE SECURITY PATROL, AND HE'S THE WORLDS MOST RUTHLESS SCIENCE PIRATE!

SURELY YE'VE LESS ***MURDER-WORTHY*** MOTIVES...

...LIKE, OH, I DON'T KNOW, "WHY, WE'RE COLLECTIN' FOR THE POOR LAME SEA-HORSES...

...BUT WE CAN SEE YE'RE BUSY, WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY."

OR HOW ABOUT, "WHY MR. COGHLAN, IT'S YER BIRTHDAY, AND YER MATES HAVE HIRED US SAUCY, SUB-AQUATIC ***STRIPOGRAMS!***"

OR PERHAPS...

⁂

OW.

DID YOUSE JUST HIT ME WITH A MAGIC SWORD, YE LITTLE FOCKER?

ME? NO. NO, I, UM...

YES. YES, ACTUALLY, I DID. SORRY.

OH, YE'RE ***SORRY,*** ARE YE?

I SHOULD PUT THAT DOWN. IT'S CLEARLY DOIN' NOTHIN' TO ENDEAR YE TO ME.

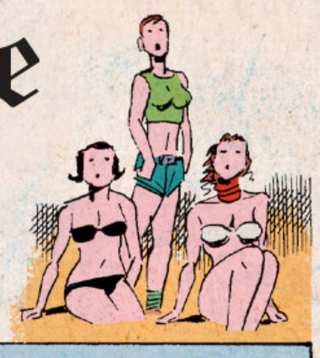
UH... W-WELL, I SUPPOSE...

THERE, THAT'S BETTER.

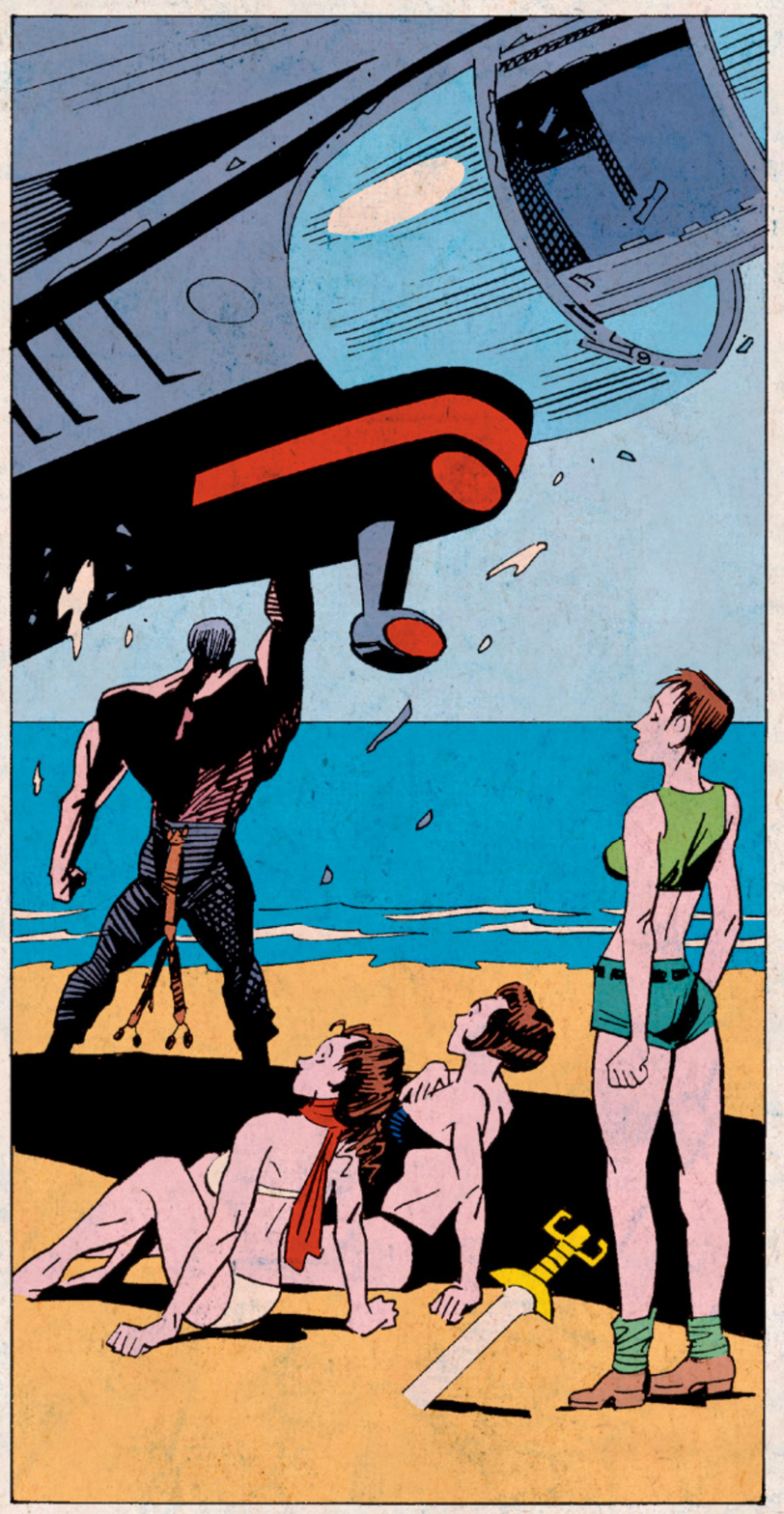
NOW, THEN, I WANT EVERYBODY TO WATCH WHAT I'M GOIN' TO DO NEXT VERY ***CAREFULLY.***

The Chicago Sunday Tribune

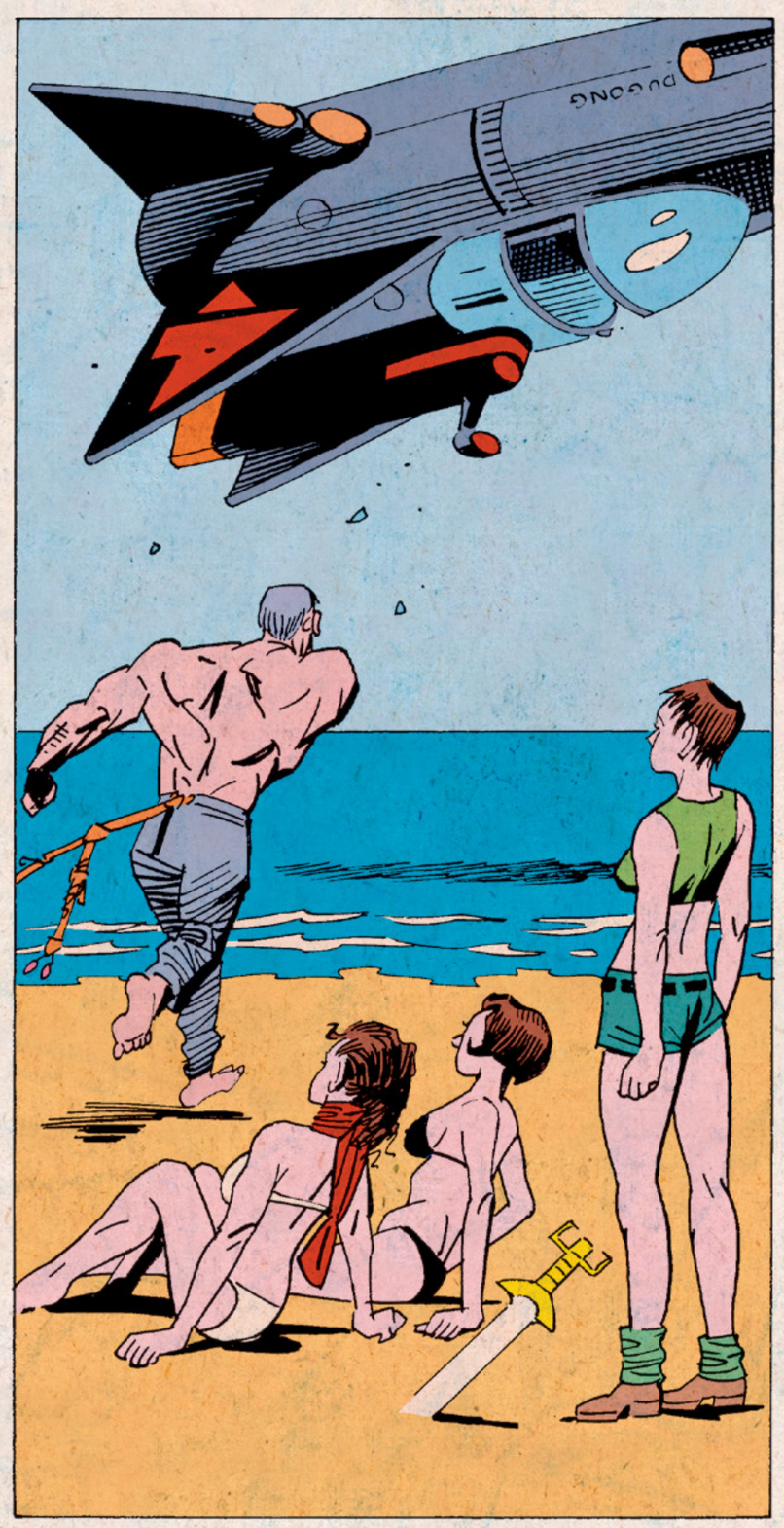
COMIC JANUARY 17, 2010 SUPPLEMENT.



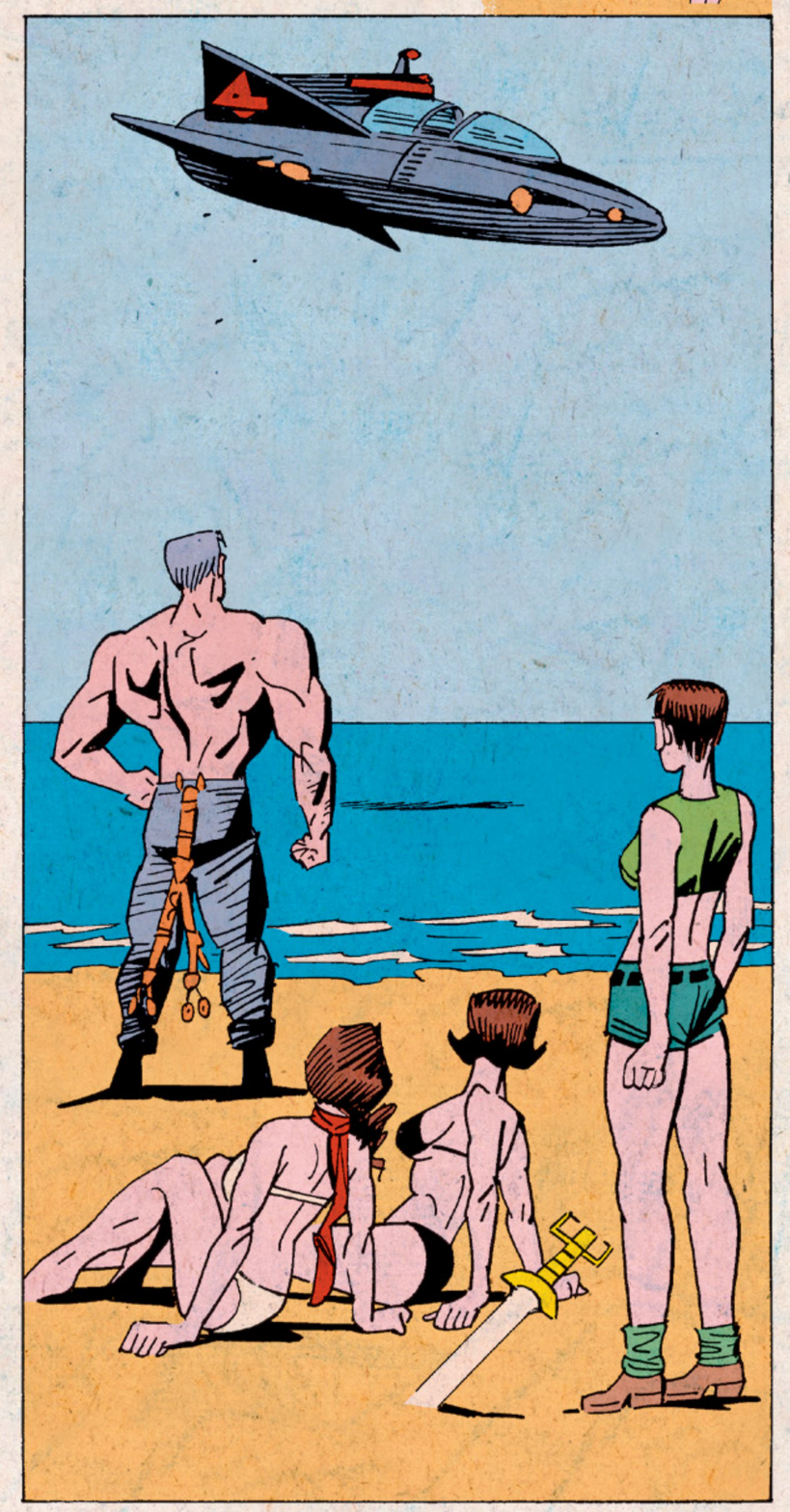
NOW, WASN'T THAT KIND OF HUGO HERCULES?



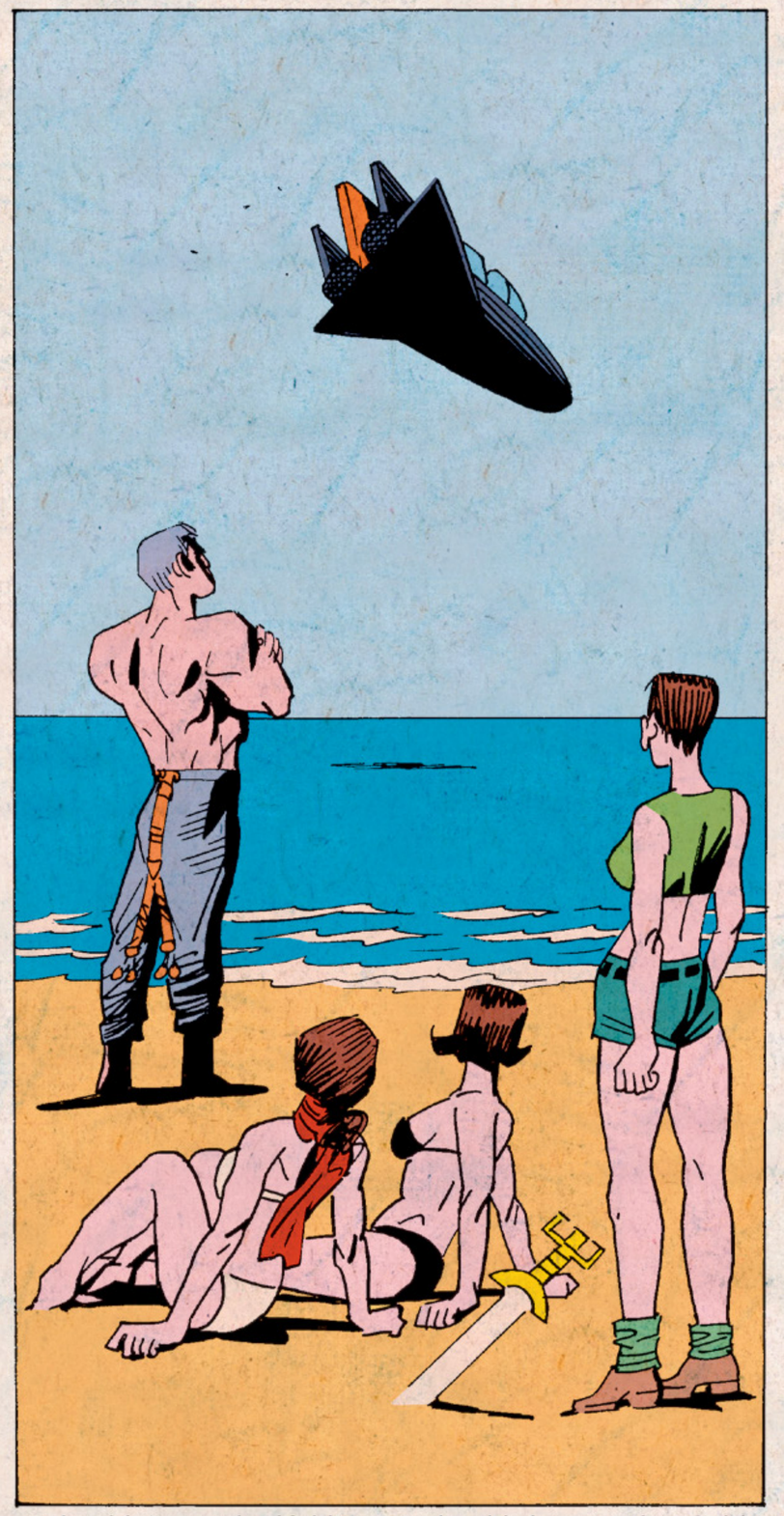
By the sunny seashore, Hugo Hercules has spied three bathing beauties. "Sure, now, I'll impress these colleens by liftin' their sailin'-dinghy, so I will," muses the genial quarter-divinity.



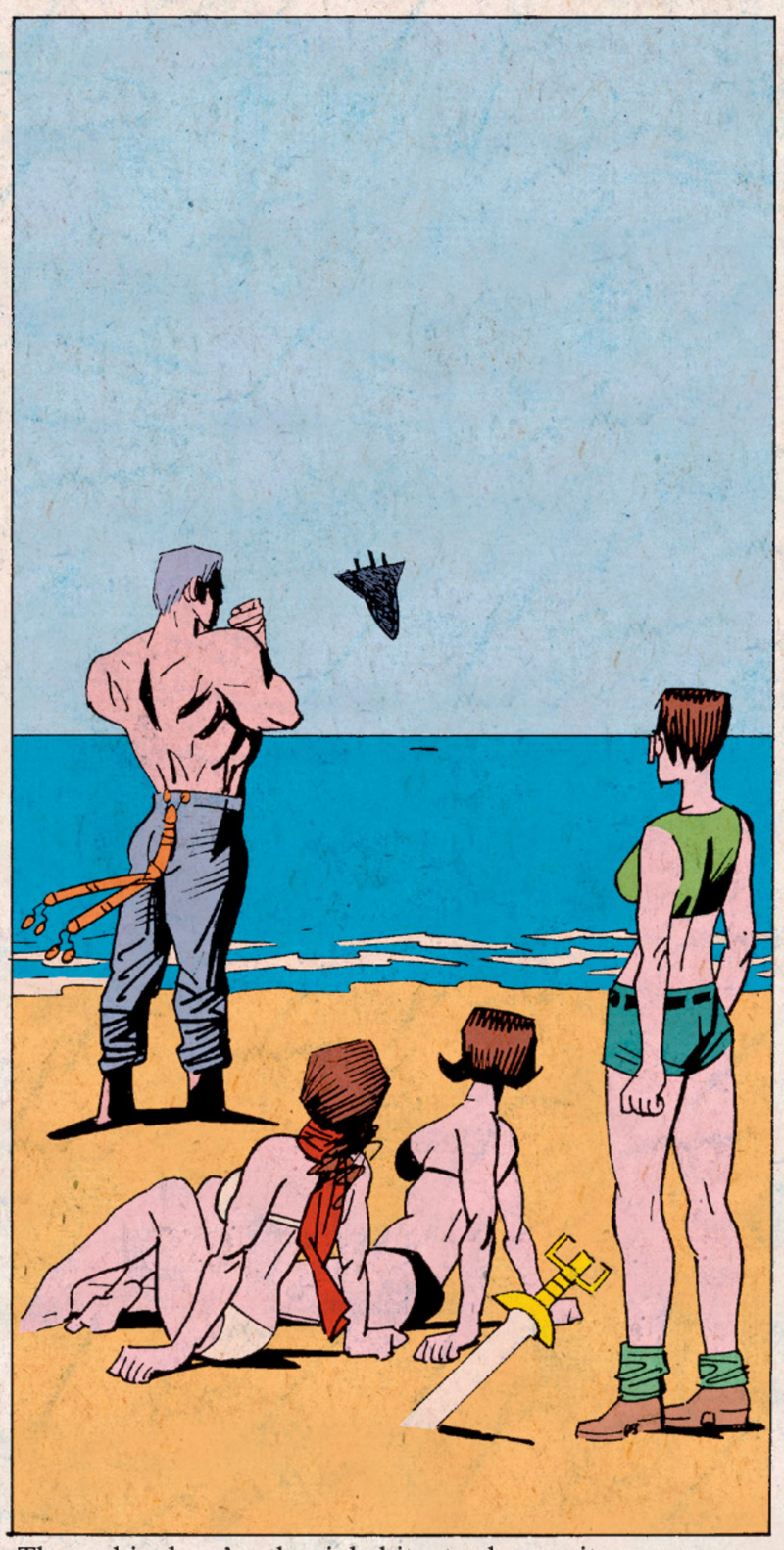
My goodness! Will you look at that, now! Hugo takes his generous gesture further by returning the young lovelies' vessel to its natural marine environment, setting their girlish hearts aflutter.



As if lighter than a feather, the precisely-engineered submersible sails through the cerulean South Pacific heavens. You can bet our Hugo has the skimpily-clad sirens' full attention now!



I shouldn't wonder if this muscular third-generation Celtic god-king makes these fillies' pulses race like stallions! Meanwhile, the precisely-engineered submersible sails through the cerulean South Pacific heavens.



The archipelago's other inhabitants observe its passage. Haciocram, isle of prophets, takes it for a portent of apocalypse as the precisely-engineered submersible sails through the cerulean South Pacific heavens.

World events take place at their accustomed pace and at last the precisely-engineered submersible sails no more through the cerulean South Pacific heavens. "Just as easy," quips our chum.

RIGHT. WE'VE ESTABLISHED YE'RE NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE, AND THAT YER MAGIC SWORD IS SHITE.

I'M THINKIN', ON YER KNEES WITH HANDS BEHIND YER HEADS MIGHT BE THE BEST APPROACH TO YER CONSIDERABLE PREDICAMENT.

SO, NOW, UNLESS YE'VE ANYTHIN' MORE ANTIQUATED THAT YE'RE GOIN' TO TRY AND KILL ME WITH--LIKE A FLINT SPEAR, SAY--I'LL BE GETTIN' ***DRESSED.***

AND AFTER THAT, WE'LL SEE WHAT'S TO BE DONE WITH YE.

I--I CAN'T QUITE BELIEVE THIS. WE'RE PIRATE CAPTIVES, WATCHING A MYTHOLOGICAL GIANT USE A MOBILE PHONE.

I CAN'T EVEN QUITE BELIEVE MOBILE ***PHONES.***

HOW DELIGHTFULLY ***INNOCENT.*** WE WEREN'T ***ALL*** LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE INSTITUTIONALIZED FOR FORTY YEARS, YOU KNOW.

HANG ON, SOMEBODY'S COMING. ANOTHER ***GIANT,*** A-AND...

Oh.

ORLANDO?

LANDO, ISN'T THAT THE PINK ***CHILD?***

YES. YES, IT IS. THIS SITUATION JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER AND ***BETTER,*** DOESN'T IT?

WH-WHO...?

UM...HELLO? D-DO YOU THINK WE MIGHT STAND ***UP?***

I pray thee...

...do not rise.

"GARATH--SATIN--I HOPE YOUR FLIGHT OVER WAS COMFORTABLE?

"THANKS FOR AGREEING TO MEET ME HERE, INCIDENTALLY. WE'LL CALL AT THE U.N. LATER, BUT TODAY'S MY DAY FOR VISITING THE ***HOME.***"

"ZAM."

AFTER ALL, I MIGHT NEED IT ***MYSELF*** SOON. HOW DO ***YOU*** KEEP SO YOUNG, SATIN?

30th-CENTURY ***BIOENGINEERING.*** JIM, DOES AMERICA HAVE ***MANY*** OF THESE SUPER-RETIREMENT HOMES?

ZAM.

OH, HUNDREDS. I SUPPOSE IT'S A PROBLEM WE SHOULD HAVE SEEN ***COMING...***

ZAM.

SAM? YOU MEAN ***UNCLE*** SAM, WITH THE TOP ***HAT?*** HE'S BEEN PASSED AWAY YEARS NOW.

I MEAN, EVEN IF THE MAJORITY WERE ***PROPAGANDA*** STUNTS, THAT STILL LEAVES THOUSANDS OF ***REAL*** SUPERHUMANS, MOSTLY IN THEIR SEVENTIES.

THEY'RE PHYSICALLY LONG-LIVED, BUT AS PRONE TO DEMENTIA AS ***ANYBODY.***

MISS ***JOYCE?*** HELLO?

IT'S NO GOOD, SHE'S MEDICATED. CAN YOU REACH HER WITH THE BROOM, LIKE LAST TIME?

MAN, DAY IN, DAY OUT WITH THIS SAME BULLSHIT...

WHO PAYS FOR THEIR CARE?

THESE DAYS? TELEVISION AND MOVIE COMPANIES, MOSTLY. THEIR FRANCHISES MIGHT BECOME ***VALUABLE*** AGAIN, SO THEY'RE NOT REALLY ***ALLOWED*** TO DIE.

...NUCLEAR EXPLOSION IN UGANDA.

IN OTHER NEWS, LOUNGE SINGER AND MEDIA PERSONALITY ***JOHNNY GENTLE*** HAS CHALLENGED PRESIDENT DAVID PALMER TO PRODUCE HIS ***BIRTH CERTIFICATE...***

BREAKING NEWS BREAKIN

DAILY SENTINEL
WE WIN

WHY, JIMMY LOGAN, YOU FABULOUS OLD BRUTE! OVER ***HERE!***

LINDA! AND KIM! HOW ARE MY TWO FAVOURITE HOLLYWOOD **SEXPOTS?**

LONG SINCE BOILED OVER, SWEETIE. WHO ARE **THESE?**

GENTLE CLAIMS THE PRESIDENT IS "A MELANISTIC TREEN BORN ON VENUS."

RUMORED TO BE ENTERING **POLITICS,** GENTLE'S POLICIES INCLUDE ANNEXING CANADA AND MEXICO...

THIS IS GARATH AND SATIN, FRIENDS FROM ENGLAND. THEY'RE STILL IN THE BUSINESS.

REALLY? AT **THEIR** AGE?

ACTUALLY, I'M HERE FROM THE FUTURE, HOPING TO AVERT AN IMMINENT INTERPLANETARY **CATASTROPHE.**

...REPORTEDLY RETALIATING TO SATIRICAL JIBES FROM CANADA'S **TERRANCE AND PHILLIP** SHOW.

THERE'S A **FUTURE,** OTHER THAN JUST REBOOTING THE 20th CENTURY FOREVER? WONDERS WILL NEVER **CEASE.**

LET'S **HOPE** NOT. LISTEN, I'D PROMISED THESE TWO A VISIT TO THE **U.N.** I'LL SEE YOU BEAUTIES NEXT WEEK.

THE HERO POPULATION'S CERTAINLY **EXPANDED** SINCE I PASSED THROUGH IN 1958.

IS CAPTAIN UNIVERSE STILL PART OF THAT POPULA-TION?

NO. I'VE BEEN JIM LOGAN FOR **DECADES** NOW.

ZAM.

NCE CHASE

QUAMAN VIII

DARKTOPO RISING PG

H² Oh! NY TIMES.

SPARKY WATTS V RADIOACTIVE MAN

DAWN OF A UTILITIES COMPANY

WHAT HAPPENED? DID YOU LOSE YOUR POWERS?

NO. I JUST LOST MY **ENTHUSI-ASM.**

FANTASTIC ADVENTURERS WERE ONCE INSPIR-ING **RARITIES.** NOW THERE'S A MONOCULTURE OF SUPERMEN, SO THEY'RE NOTHING **SPECIAL.**

STRAIGHT TO VIDEO

GENUINE WONDER GETS **DEVALUED,** AND THE FIELD IS CURRENTLY SUCH BIG **BUSINESS** THAT I'M FINDING IT SLIGHTLY **INSIDIOUS.**

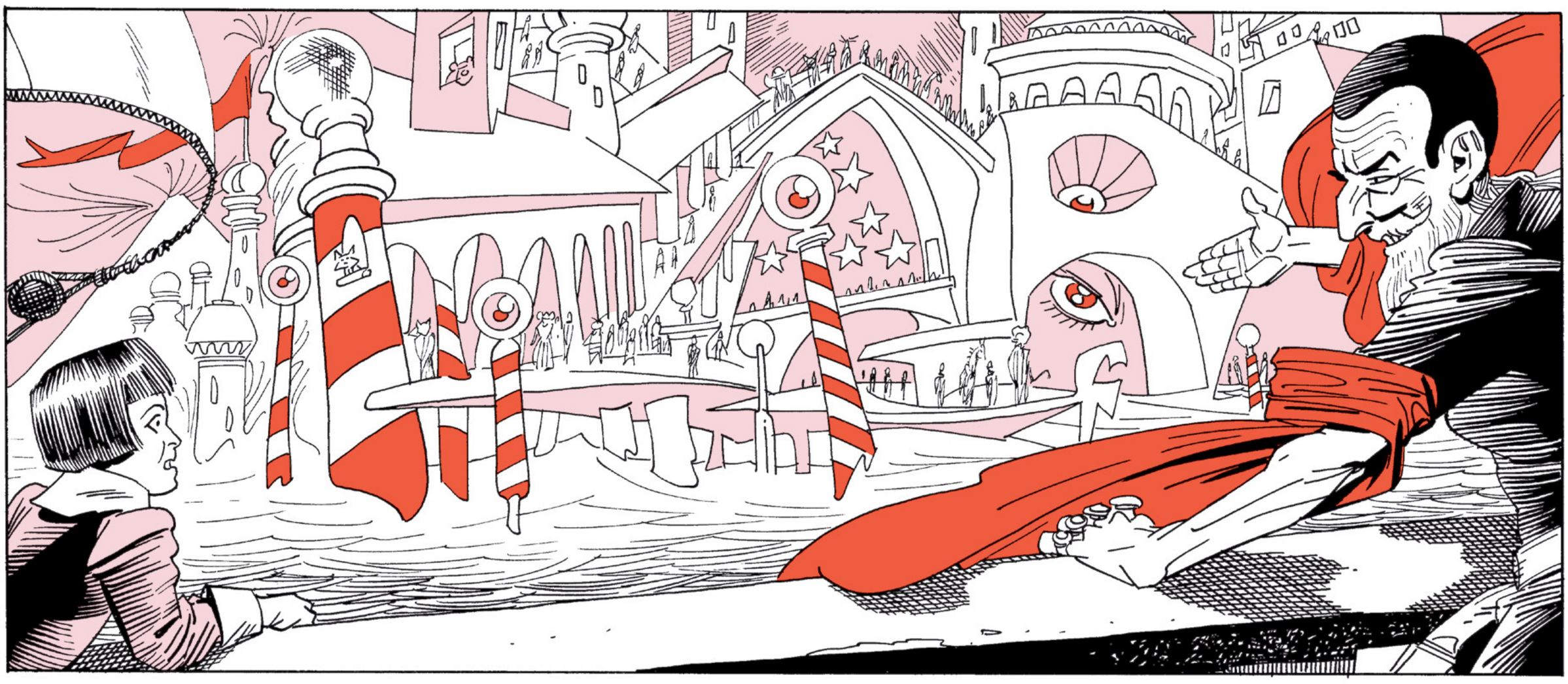
AT THE U.N., I'VE SOME **FOOTAGE** YOU SHOULD SEE.

OUR CALLING'S BEEN COMPROMISED SINCE ITS SECRET **ORIGINS.**

Prospero's Men

Our comrades brave a North Atlantic gale where Prospero insisted they should sail,
And Captain Owemuch to Orlando says, "A wizard's transport very seldom pays."

On deck, Orlando finds his master there accompanied by sprites of Earth and Air.
Pointing astern, the warlock tells his squire,"Yonder's the destination I desire."



In disbelief the youthful changeling sees a shimmering mirage of onyx quays
Whence chimeras gaze down at those below. "Behold the Blazing World," purrs Prospero.

"Here fables live forever," claims the mage. "Fantasies who've escaped their printed page.
Like our friend Christian, vanished here before, where now I follow," smiles the conjuror.

Quixote, now, and Miss Amber St. Clair happen upon Orlando in despair.
He tells them "Prospero's deranged, I think, and plans to throw himself into the drink!"

Quixote swears he'll lance the ocean deep while Amber flirts to stay Prospero's leap,
But Caliban and Ariel disagree and help the Milanese into the sea.

Squire, concubine and knight exclaim in fear until a strange phenomenon's made clear:
Prospero and his creatures tread the brine as though upon an English lane's incline.

Unhurriedly amidst the storm and spray to visionary wharfs they make their way,
Where animal-head men guard, tirelessly, the sacred shores of the imagin'ry.

Upon that threshold Prospero looks back at his companions, saucer-eyed, jaws slack.
A solitary "Follow me" they hear before he and the vision disappear.

"Adios, companero," sighs the knight. Under her powder, Miss St. Clair turns white,
And young Orlando worries for his neck when Robert Owemuch hastens above deck.

"Where's Prospero? My fee's due," he complains, at which Orlando haltingly explains
The mystic portal where the problem lies. "Oh, fornicate my life," the captain cries.

"That shifty bastard's shafted me again!
See how magicians treat the working class

LINCOLN ISLAND

KEY

1. NEMO POINT
2. JANNI NEMO MEMORIAL DEDICATED 1987
3. CONNING TOWER HILL, ICBM LAUNCH SITE, PLUS STANDARD ISSUE "ROGUE STATE" NUCLEAR PAYLOAD
4. MORS-ROBUR AIRCRAFT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
5. NEMO SUBMARINE PENS
6. PRINCE DAKKAR MEMORIAL TOWER DEDICATED 1910
7. JANNI NEMO "WARRIORS" HOSPITAL FOUNDED 1941
8. MORS-NEMO "CARNAGE" CANNON
9. ROBUR NUCLEAR FACILITY
10. "NEMO'S KEEP" LEADER'S PRIVATE RESIDENCE AND SCIENCE ATRIUM
11. KRAKEN BRIDGE
12. PUGWASH OLD TOWN
13. BROAD ARROW JACK MEMORIAL DEDICATED 1941

WELL, AT LEAST WE'RE BEING ***TAKEN*** SOMEWHERE, ALTHOUGH I'M ASTONISHED BY ***DAKKAR CITY.*** M.I.5 HAS NO INFORMATION ON LINCOLN ISLAND SINCE THE LATE 1890s.

I WAS HERE FIFTY YEARS AGO, WHEN JANNI STARTED ***MODERNIZING*** EVERYTHING. YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE YOU ***STAND*** WITH THE NEMOS. THEY'RE A DYNASTY OF ***NUT-CASES...***

QUIET. PINK CHILD MUSTN'T HEAR ANYTHING ***DISHARMONIOUS.***

I pray thee, do not rise.

PINK ***CHILD?*** FRANKLY, THIS ISN'T THE ETERNAL LIFE I WAS LED TO ***EXPECT.***

WELL, WHOSE IDEA WAS APPROACHING A PIRATE STRONGHOLD IN A MARINE ***POLICE*** VESSEL?

I WASN'T ANTICIPATING ACTUAL ***PIRATES!***

WELL, THERE'S YOUR ***PROBLEM.*** YOU--

--OW! FUCK'S SAKE, MINA...!

CAPTAIN? IT'S THE INTRUDERS MR. COGHLAN REPORTED. PINK CHILD ***RECOGNIZES*** THEM, APPARENTLY.

I pray thee, do not rise.

THAT'S VERY KIND, BUT I WASN'T GOING TO.

YES, I RECOGNIZE THEM, TOO. THAT'S MS. MURRAY AND MISTER...MS. ORLANDO.

WELCOME TO LINCOLN.

I TRUST YOU'LL FORGIVE THIS TERRIBLE SUPER-VILLAIN ***THRONE.***

MR. ISHMAEL? FOR SHIV'S SAKE, GET THESE WOMEN SOME ***CLOTHES.***

PERHAPS SOMETHING OF ***GRANDMOTHER'S...***

THESE OFFICES ARE INCREDIBLE, BUT DON'T YOU MISS BEING CAPTAIN *UNIVERSE*?

OH, ***EVERY-ONE'S*** SUPERHUMAN NOWADAYS. THIS ***JOHNNY GENTLE*** CHARACTER, PEOPLE CALL HIM "THE JOHNNY" AS IF THAT'S HIS SECRET ***IDENTITY.***

AMERICA SEEMS ***INFATUATED*** WITH COSTUMED *ÜBERMENSCHEN*. PERSONALLY, I BLAME ALL THOSE DISMAL, BORDERLINE FASCIST NOVELS BY ***ATLANTA HOPE,*** LIKE *TELEMACHUS SNEEZED.*

UNITED NATIONS PLAZA

ISHMAEL And ISAAC'S

RESTAURANT

STORM R

W.A.S.T.E.

I SUPPOSE 30th-CENTURY CINE-ARCHAEOLOGISTS ***DO*** IDENTIFY GRIFFITH'S *BIRTH OF A NATION* AS THE FIRST MASKED ***AVENGER*** VEHICLE...

MR. LOGAN, YOU MENTIONED SOME ***FOOTAGE*** YOU WANTED TO SHOW US?

YES. IT'S A FRAGMENT FROM KANSAS, 1920, DOCUMENTING AMERICA'S BELATED RESPONSE TO ENGLAND, FRANCE AND GERMANY'S ***SPECIAL TEAMS.***

YOU SHOULD WATCH THIS CAREFULLY.

--llow me along here. The people in Washington will want to see this.

Here's the plane to drop the incendiary flare. Probably I'll fly that ***myself.***

Then we got the fellers setting the explosive charge to suggest the ***rocket*** impact.

How's it going with you men?

Every-thing's just jim dandy, Mr. Smith.

Naturally, we'll shoot that ***after*** our main scene, but edit it in right ***before.***

Oh, and right there's our plywood ***rocket.*** I still think it's too ***small.***

To have come from space, realistically it would be ***bigger.*** It's basic ***aeronautics.*** But the client ***insisted,*** so...

Ah! How's it looking, Max?

scenario

We're almost ready.

This is my assistant director, Max Von ***Kastell***. Explain the special effect, Max.

The child's hand we fasten to the rocket, as if he ***lifts*** it.

See? Like he's some little ***Hercules***. And then our lovely Miss Desmond says...

"Why, ***look***, Eben! It's a little ***baby!***"

Honestly, Nevada, ***lovely?*** Dressed like ***this?***

Farmer's wives aren't ***glamorous,*** honey. Now, let's get a closeup of our ***star.***

He's actually ***two,*** I believe?

That's right. Sweetheart? Say hello to Mr. Smith...

Aw, look at him! He's [illegible]

JIM, THAT WAS NEVADA ***SMITH.*** ARE YOU SAYING AMERICA ***FAKED*** ITS SPECIAL INDIVIDUALS?

BACK THEN, THEY MOSTLY ***HAD*** TO. HUGO DANNER, THEIR ONLY GENUINE SUPERHUMAN, HAD RECENTLY ***DISAPPEARED,*** AND BOY INVENTORS LIKE TOM SWYFTE WERE IN DECLINE.

IT'S ALL A SHAM.

I'M SORRY, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO FIND ***VULL*** ON YOUR ***OWN.***

U

...BEST FUCK I'VE HAD THIS CENTURY. IF ONLY YOU'D HAD SEXIER NAMES, LIKE "TITTY BONANZA" OR "PUDENDA DIANGELO."

Ah, well.

LISTEN, WE SHOULD BE GETTING INTO ***WORK.*** I'M PLANNING A TRIP UP NORTH AND I'LL NEED ***TRANSPORT,*** SO THAT MEANS...

...YOU'LL HAVE TO GET ONTO COLONEL ***MAGNOLIA*** OR WHATEVER HIS PAINT-CHIP IS. CAN YOU DO THAT FOR ME, QUEEN?

A-ACTUALLY, IT'S ***KING.***

L-LOOK, M, I KNOW WE'VE CONFIRMED YOUR IDENTITY WITH FINGER-PRINTS AND RETINAL SCANS, BUT THIS IS ALL MOST ***IRREGULAR.***

YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO JUST CALL ***SPECTRUM*** AND DEMAND...

BORN?

NO SMOKING

Dr. Evil mo

Mark CAINE

FOR DESTRUCTION

...A NEPTUNE-CLASS VESSEL FITTED FOR SUSTAINED POLAR ENGAGEMENT, AS YOU REQUESTED, SIR.

WE'RE LOADING THE PITCHFORK NOW, AND YOUR TEAM ARE WAITING FOR YOU BELOW DECK IN THE...

...ARSE, BOTH OF THEM! NOT BAD, EH?

UM...NO. NO, INDEED NOT.

SIR, THIS MISSION TO THE ***ARCTIC***: IS IT ANOTHER PLACE LIKE ***UGANDA***?

YOU MEAN, SOMEWHERE ***MYTHICAL*** FROM OUR MYSTERY TEAM'S ***ANNALS***? YES, IT IS.

THERE'S ***LOTS***. NO WONDER MYCROFT ***HOLMES*** WAS SO OBSESSED.

Uh, sir?

SPECTRUM ISSUED US THESE THERMAL ***UNIFORMS***. THERE'S ONE HERE THAT'S YOUR SIZE...

FOR ***THIS***?

J-6, THIS IS JUST A HARMLESS BIT OF ***SPORT***.

"THIS IS NOTHING WORTH GETTING ALL DRESSED ***UP*** FOR."

CUT AROUND THE THICK, BLACK LINES, FIT THE CLOTHES TO OUR GIRLS' FIGURES AND SEE HOW THEY LOOK.

MINA

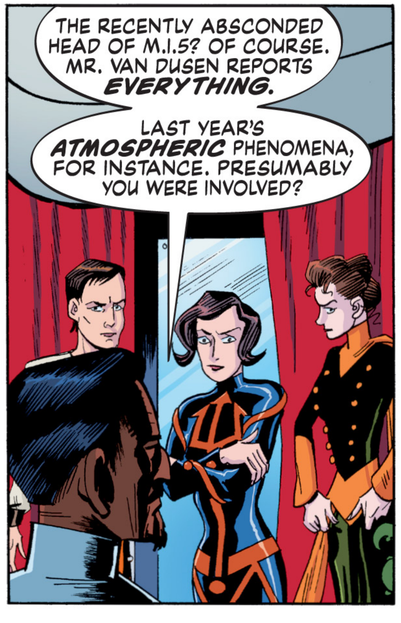
CUT DOTTED LINE FOR HEAD

ORLANDO

CUT OUT DOTTED LINE FOR FACE.

EMMA

TAKE CARE, GIRLS.



Ms. Murray.

Ms. Orlando.

Ms. Night.

A very good afternoon to you.

MITHRAS. LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT...

Um...G-GOOD AFTERNOON. MR. VAN DUSEN, HOW DID YOU KNOW WE'D VISITED ***KOR?***

From Ms. Night's *REJUVENATION,* and the recent nuclear *DETONATION* there.

Such weaponry suggests state *BACKING.* There is a probability that this relates to Ms. Night's *DEFECTION.*

OH, SWEET SUFFERING ***GLOGAUER!*** YOU MEAN SOME FUCKER'S NUKED MY FUCKING ***POOL?***

NOW, IF THERE'S TO BE PROFANITIES, I'D BEST BE GETTIN' THE PINK CHILD TO HER PINK ***APARTMENTS.***

I pray thee, do not rise.

OH, SHUT UP! I MEAN, I KNOW ***TECHNICALLY*** IT WASN'T MY POOL, BUT STILL! HONESTLY, THE FUCKING ***NERVE...***

WAIT. WHY DO YOU SUSPECT THIS RELATES TO ***ME?***

I recently obtained footage of you, rejuvenated, boarding a ferry in *FREETOWN.* We should assume Britain's government did *LIKEWISE.*

While they may have previously regarded Ayesha's Pool as a fable, your reappearance provided evidence to the *CONTRARY.*

IT ***WASNT*** AYESHA'S POOL! IT WAS ***MY*** FUCKING POOL! IN 1240 B.C., I...

Also, there were three allegedly coincidental *SUICIDES* in London, shortly before the Uganda explosion.

All were elderly females and former British *AGENTS.*

Consequently, all were previous associates of Ms. *NIGHT.*

THAT...THAT ISN'T THE WOMEN WHO HELPED US LEAVE ***LONDON,*** IS IT? THEY HAVEN'T...

OH, ***GOD!*** OH, GOD, IT'S PATSY, TARSY AND ***CATHY!*** TH-THEY MUST HAVE ***TORTURED*** THEM, FOUND OUT ABOUT ***UGANDA,*** A-AND THEN...

Oh, no. OH ***NO...***

HEY, COME ON. I MEAN, FATALLY TORTURING OLD WOMEN CAN'T BE M.I.5 ***POLICY,*** SURELY?

WHY NOT? TH-THEY'LL HAVE APPOINTED A NEW ***DIRECTOR...***

ONE WHO'D NUKE THE POOL?

YES, WHY WOULD THEY ***DO*** THAT?

WE'VE ALWAYS FEARED SOME TYRANT ***COM-MANDEERING*** IT.

M-MIGHT SOMEONE USE IT, ***THEN*** DESTROY IT?

KEEPING IMMORTALITY FOR THEM-SELVES? THAT'S ***MONSTROUS.***

PERHAPS THE NEW DIRECTOR'S A ***MONSTER.***

ONE WHO'S READ THE BLACK ***DOSSIER?***

APPARENTLY. THAT NARROWS IT ***DOWN.***

BUT EM SAID ONLY ***SHE*** STILL REMEMBERED US.

WELL, YES, ALTHOUGH--

I KNOW. THE NEW ***DIRECTOR.*** I KNOW WHO IT ***IS.***

IT'S THE MAN WHO KILLED MY ***FATHER.*** AND ***GODFATHER.***

IN 1958. IT'S ***JIMMY.***

Oh, CHRIST...

NOW HE'S MURDERED MY ***FRIENDS.***

I'LL RETURN TO ***LONDON.*** I'LL ***AVENGE*** THEM.

If that is your decision, you should be advised concerning new data I am only now receiving.

According to satellite information, there was an event just hours ago that may be pertinent to your intentions. I am currently processing the *BULLETINS.*

They concern the Arctic *CIRCLE...*

G-GOOD LORD. THOSE ***STRUCTURES,*** SHIMMERING IN AND OUT OF SIGHT LIKE A FATA ***MORGANA.*** WHAT ON EARTH ***IS*** IT?

IT'S OUR ***TARGET.***

RIGHT, THEN. I THINK WE'RE LOCKED ONTO ITS ***COORDI-NATES...***

"LET'S THROW THE ***PITCHFORK.***

"YOU SEE, THIS PLACE IS OUR SPECIAL TEAM'S ***SANCTUARY.*** IT'S CALLED ***THE BLAZING WORLD.***

"THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S REPUTEDLY LIT BY A THOUSAND ***SUNS...***

"...SO WE'RE GOING TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING THAT'S NOTORIOUSLY ***BRIGHTER."***

"S-SIR? THE PITCHFORK'S JUST DROPPED OFF OUR RADAR. ALL OUR INSTRU-MENTS ARE SHOWING NOTHING ***THERE."***

"I KNOW. THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S DISAPPEARED OUT OF ***OUR*** WORLD..."

...AND INTO ***THEIRS.***

COME ON, COME ON. ANY MOMENT NOW.

ONE HUNDRED ELEPHANTS, ***TWO*** HUNDRED ELEPHANTS, ***THR--***

WELL, LADS, I THINK WE'VE JUST FUCKED ***FAIRYLAND.***

YOU KNOW, WITH A BIT OF LUCK, WE COULD BE BACK TO LONDON IN TIME FOR ***BREAKFAST.***

DUM DIDDLUM DUM, DUM-DUM-DUM, DUM DIDDLUM DUM, DUM-DUM-DUM...

PHEW! HOW WILL WE EVER FOLLOW **THAT?** TO FIND OUT, HURRY DOWN TO THE NEWSAGENT'S AND RESERVE THE NEXT ISSUE OF YOUR TERRIFIC TEARAWAY **TEMPEST!**

SEVEN STARS

HOW WILL OUR WONDERMEN FARE NOW THERE'S A **NEW** TEAM OF SUPER-DOERS AROUND? LEARN THE ANSWER IN **CHAPTER TWO** OF OUR BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL...

"ENTER THE VICTORY VANGUARD!"

SEEMINGLY ATTACKED BY RIVALS, THE SEVEN ADVENTURERS DECIDE TO PAY THEIR COMPETITORS A **VISIT...**

GOVERNMENT SPECIAL PROJECTS ARE CONDUCTED FROM **VAUXHALL.**

CAPTAIN, ARE THERE NOW SO **MANY** FANTASTIC HEROES THAT WE MUST BATTLE EACH **OTHER?**

HMM! VULL THE INVISIBLE HAS A **POINT.** IT MAKES ME CONSIDER MY **OWN** INVESTITURE AS A CHAMPION OF THE COSMOS!

JIM (**CAPTAIN UNIVERSE**) LOGAN'S INCREDIBLE SCIENCE-POWERED MIND CASTS ITSELF BACK TO HIS EARLIEST STORY...

"IT BEGAN IN 1954. I'D FOLLOWED MY BROTHER **JET** INTO THE U.N. **INTERPLANETARY DIVISION...**"

REMEMBER, JIM, WITHOUT YOU LABORATORY RESEARCHERS, US HIGH-FLYERS COULDN'T **OPERATE.**

:SIGH: I'D PREFER GLORY OF MY **OWN.** MAYBE **ONE** DAY!

"BUT THEN, WHILE INVESTIGATING ELECTRONIC IMPULSES FROM SPACE..."

:GASP! : THIS FEELS PECULIAR! IT'S AS IF THE ELECTRICITY IS TRANSMITTING A MESSAGE INTO MY BRAIN'S **MIND-WIRING!**

"SURE ENOUGH, I IMMEDIATELY WITNESSED A VISION OF **ANOTHER WORLD!**"

GREETINGS, JAMES LOGAN! WE SCIENCE-ELDERS OF THE UNIVERSE WOULD MAKE YOU OUR AGENT ON EARTH.

I, **GALILEO,** BESTOW THE GIFT OF **COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS,** WHILE MY COLLEAGUE **ARCHIMEDES** GRANTS MASTERY OVER THE FOUR FORCES OF **PHYSICS!**

I AM **LEONARDO,** AND GENIUS OF **INVENTION** IS MY GIFT, WHILE **ARISTOTLE** BRINGS ACCESS TO OCCULT **PHILOSOPHICAL** DIMENSIONS, AND **PYTHAGORAS** OFFERS BOTH **MATHEMATICS** AND **BILOCATION!**

SPEAK OUR INITIALS--**GALAP**-- AND BE INSTANTLY **TRANSFORMED!**

"THOSE DEITIES OF REASON WERE AS GOOD AS THEIR WORD! I BECAME **CAPTAIN UNIVERSE,** THE SUPER-MARVEL KING OF THE SPACEWAYS!"

GALAP!

WHOOSH

"YET EVEN THEN I BATTLED RIVAL SUPERHUMAN **STARDUST** TO THE DEATH AND APPROPRIATED HIS **SPACE-STATION!**

"PERHAPS VULL'S RIGHT. PERHAPS WE'RE TOO MANY."

SUDDENLY, VULL'S STRANGE ELECTRONIC VOICE BRINGS CAPTAIN UNIVERSE'S ATTENTION BACK TO THE PRESENT...

THAT'S THE PLACE, DOWN THERE!

WE'VE GOT A **RECEPTION COMMITTEE!**

SO THIS IS THE **VICTORY VANGUARD!** ARE YOU FELLOWS LOOKING FOR A **SCRAP** OR SOMETHING?

WH-WHAT MAKES YOU THINK **THAT?** I'VE ALWAYS **IDOLISED** YOU!

ULP! SHOULD I REPLENISH MY **POWER-SOURCE,** MR. HART?

GO AHEAD, TOMMY--THOUGH I COULD EASILY MARMALIZE **THESE** CLOTS ON MY OWN!

UM... ISN'T THAT **BEARDED** CHAP THE ONE WE JUST FATALLY **ELECTROCUTED?**

YES, IT APPEARS TO BE. PERHAPS BEST IF WE DON'T MENTION THAT.

NO PARKING by Order

WELL, WELL! IF IT ISN'T CAPTAIN **PUNY**-VERSE!

WHY ARE YOU INTERRUPTING OUR ROUTINE **MANEOUVRES?** TRYING TO ATTRACT **PUBLICITY** BY START-ING A **FIGHT?**

Mr. NIPPY

I SUPPOSE SINCE THE MARVELMAN FAMILY VANISHED LAST **YEAR,** I'M YOUR BIGGEST **TARGET!**

I GUESS FIGHTING THE INCREDIBLE **ACE HART** WOULD MAKE YOUR **REPUTA-TION!**

YIPPEE! it's Mr. N

WELL, ANYTIME YOU WANT TO SAMPLE MY **NAGASAKI KNOCKOUT,** GO RIGHT **AHEAD!**

YOU **TELL** HIM, MR. HART! =SLURP= I'M READY FOR **ANYTHING** NOW!

YIPPE Mr. N

THAT'S TOUGH TALK, HART, COMING FROM SOMEBODY WHOSE ONLY POWER IS NUCLEAR **FISSION**-- AS OPPOSED TO THE **DOZENS** OF ABILITIES **I** HAVE!

WHAT, LIKE **MATHEMATICS?** WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, **CALCULUS** ME TO DEATH?

WATCHING FROM NEARBY, BRITAIN'S SPYMASTER FUMES...

DASH IT ALL! WHAT ARE THE SEVEN **STARS** DOING HERE, WHEN WE'RE ABOUT TO COMMENCE OUR NEW TEAM'S **PRACTICE MISSION?**

W-WELL, WE CERTAINLY HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO **PROVOKE** THEM.

NO--UNLESS OUR TEAM'S VERY **EXISTENCE** IS PROVOCATION ENOUGH! STILL, THEY SHOULDN'T AFFECT OUR **TRIAL RUN.**

I UNDERSTAND WE'VE ARRANGED A VISUALLY SPECTACULAR BUT EASILY-DEFEATED **ADVERSARY** FOR OUR GROUP'S FIRST OUTING?

TH-THAT'S RIGHT, SIR. IT'S A FORMER FOE OF MR. **GUNN** HERE.

HA! I'LL SAY!

HMM. AND WE'RE POSITIVE THIS INDIVIDUAL WILL SHOW **UP?**

ABSOLUTELY. AT MR. GUNN'S SUGGESTION, WE'VE LEAKED RUMOURS OF A COLOSSAL **TUCK-HAMPER** AT VAUXHALL.

A **TUCK**-HAMPER? ARE YOU **SURE** ABOUT THIS, GUNN? YOU **DO** KNOW THAT **BRITTANUS,** PLUS **MORGAN** AND HIS BIT OF FLUFF ALL HAVE **LEAVE** TODAY?

DON'T WORRY. NEEDS BE, I'LL HANDLE THIS MENACE BY **MYSELF!**

I'VE DEFEATED HIM FOR YEARS! WHEN HE SHOWS UP, I'LL JUST SAY THE WORD AND INTRODUCE HIM TO A CERTAIN FRIEND OF MINE. ;CHUCKLE!;

WHAT? WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH YOU, MAN? WHO ARE YOU **WINKING** AT?

T.T

SORRY. I-IT'S A SORT OF **FACIAL TIC.** LOTS OF US SUPER-HEROES SUFFER FROM IT.

UM...SIR? I'M AFRAID THIS GENTLEMAN INSISTED WE **ADMIT** HIM.

M-MR. TROY IS AN AMERICAN **ATTORNEY...**

I'LL BE BRIEF.

E·A

ARE YOU JEREMY GUNN, SCHOOLTEACHER AT BASH STREET SECONDARY MODERN, ALSO SUPERHERO **MR. APOLLO?**

W-WELL, YES, BUT DON'T **TELL** EVERYBODY! THAT'S MY SECRET **IDENTITY!**

I SEE.

Mr. Apollo xxx

AND IS THIS AN ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF YOUR ALTER EGO'S **COSTUME?**

I--I SUPPOSE SO, BUT WHAT DOES...?

MR. GUNN, OTHER THAN YOUR CHEST-EMBLEM, YOU'RE ESSENTIALLY A **TRACING** OF SOMEONE LICENSED TO MY **CLIENT.**

L-LICENSED?

EXCLUSIVELY LICENSED, THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

THEY'VE OBTAINED AN **INJUNCTION.** MR. APOLLO MUST CEASE AND DESIST IMMEDIATELY, OR WE'LL SUE YOU INTO **OBLIVION!**

GEORGE, TELL ME THIS ISN'T **HAPPENING.**

I--I'M AFRAID **MOST** BRITISH SUPERMEN "ADAPT" AMERICAN **MODELS,** SIR.

ALSO, THE **ADVERSARY** WE ARRANGED WILL SHORTLY BE **ARRIVING...**

OH, HARRY H. **CORBETT!** I'D **FORGOTTEN** ABOUT THAT!

STILL, WE'VE GOT **HART** AND THE PURPLE **HOOD!** THEY CAN **ATOMIZE** THE ENEMY OR RIDDLE IT WITH **BULLETS!**

UM--THE ENEMY'S **AGE** MIGHT PRESENT A **PROBLEM,** SIR...

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE FREEMASONS' HALL THAT CONCEALS BRITAIN'S **SPY** HEADQUARTERS...

...AND CALLING YOURSELF CAPTAIN **UNIVERSE** IS REALLY **PRESUMPTUOUS!** IN FACT, IT'S...UM... WHAT THE BLAZES?

AAAGH! RUN FOR YOUR **LIVES!** IT'S **HIDEOUS!**

UH...THIS MUST BE OUR **MANOEUVRES!** IF YOU CHUMPS TRY TO FOLLOW US, I'LL...I'LL FILL YA FULL OF **LEAD!**

IT'S A FREE COUNTRY, OLD SPORT, SO WE'LL GO WHERE WE JOLLY WELL **WANT!**

HOLY **SPACE!** WHAT **IS** THAT THING RISING OUT OF THE THAMES? IT'S BIGGER THAN GORGO'S **MOTHER!**

I THINK **I** CAN IDENTIFY IT FROM MY METICULOUS RECORDS OF UNUSUAL TERRESTRIAL **PHENOMENA...**

BUOYANT QUEEN

TUCK MONITOR

VULGAR RUMBLE!

I BELIEVE THAT TO BE A FORMER ANTAGONIST OF THE ENGLISH COSTUMED ADVENTURER, **MR. APOLLO.**

IT IS KNOWN AS **TOBY THE FAT SCHOOLBOY!**

Mr. NIPPY

BEWARE CHILDREN

ENJOY SUNDAE TODAY

GROOARRGH! WHERE MY HAMPER?

OKAY, UNIVERSE, THAT CREATURE IS ONE OF OUR MEMBER'S **ARCH-FOES!** THIS IS A JOB FOR THE **VICTORY VANGUARD,** SO YOU AMATEURS SHOULD BUZZ OFF!

FINE! WE'LL LEAVE YOU **TO** IT!

RURRRGH! TOBY HUNGERS!!

CAPTAIN, ISN'T IT **CRUEL** LEAVING THAT HORROR TO THOSE FOUR **ZITZ-HEADS?** THEY'RE OBVIOUSLY **INCAPABLE!**

WELL, SATIN, IT **IS** THEIR MONSTER! IT SEEMS ONLY SPORTING THAT THEY GET FIRST **DIBS** ON IT!

HART, IT'S CLAMBERING ONTO **LAND!** MY TIME-TRAVEL ABILITIES AREN'T MASSIVELY USEFUL IN THIS SITUATION.

DON'T WORRY! MR. APOLLO WILL ARRIVE ANY MINUTE NOW.

I'LL NEED A FAMILY BLOCK OF RASPBERRY RIPPLE TO TACKLE **THAT!**

BUT...

WHERE TOBY'S HAMPER?

AIIEEEEE! OH, ZOOM AND SKYRAY, FLY ME **AWAY!**

YIPP

SUNDAE TODAY!

MR NIPPY

GREAT GUNS OF **NAVARONE!** H-HE'S EATING THE **VAN!** LOOK AT THE PETROL, BLOOD AND SPRINKLES CASCADING DOWN HIS CHINS!

WHERE'S MR. **APOLLO?** MAYBE I'LL TRY MY URANIUM **UPPERCUT!**

NO! FOR GOD'S SAKE, DON'T DO **ANYTHING!**

TOBY WANT **TUCK!** HROORRGH!

M-MR. APOLLO CAN'T APPEAR FOR **LEGAL** REASONS!

WHAT? SO IT'S TIME FOR MY LOS ALAMOS **LEFT HOOK?**

IT'S A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD **BOY,** YOU PLUTONIUM POLTROON! THINK OF THE **HEADLINES!**

WHERE MY WAGON WHEELS? NARRGH!!

S-SO I CAN'T JUST SHOOT IT?

NOT WITHOUT COMMITTING **CHILD** MURDER!

BUT IT'S **RAMPAGING!** WHAT SHALL WE **DO?**

AND SO...

CRISPS! CRISPS **NOW!** GLUURRGH!

...SO WE'D APPRECIATE ANY, Y'KNOW, ANY HELP SHORT OF **KILLING** IT.

FEAR NOT, MORTAL! TRUST ONLY THE UNBELIEVABLE MYSTERY OF...**THE ZODIAC!**

WITH MY WELL-KNOWN POWER TO TURN HUMANS INTO ANYTHING I **WISH**, I HEREBY TRANSFORM THEE TO **TOBY**-- THE **AVERAGELY-PROPORTIONED** SCHOOLBOY!

WURRRGH? GETTING **SMALLER**...

...**HEALTHIER**...

...AND MORE **GRAMMATICAL!**

GYM MONITOR

THERE! NOW ISN'T THAT BETTER THAN BEING A HUNGER-MADDENED **COLLOSUS?**

CRIKEY, I'LL SAY! IT WAS ONLY THE TAUNTS AND CRUEL NICKNAMES THAT PROVOKED MY SHOCKING BEHAVIOUR!

NOW I CAN LEAD A FULFILLED **LIFE**... THANKS TO YOU **SEVEN STARS!**

WELL, I THINK WE'VE MADE OUR **POINT**. BACK TO **BASE**, CAPTAIN?

YOU'RE THE BOSS, VULL!

AND, AS OUR HEROES RETURN TO THEIR FITZROVIA **FORTRESS**...

HUH! WE CERTAINLY PUT THAT **VICTORY VANGUARD** IN ITS PLACE!

RATHER! PROBABLY THE LAST WE'LL **HEAR** OF THEM!

BUT THE NEXT DAY...

CONFOUND OUR LUCK! NOW WE'LL HAVE TO TRY EVEN **HARDER** TO MAKE AN IMPACT!

MY SEVEN SAVIOURS SAYS LARDY LEVIATHAN

TOP SECRET

I--I HAVE THE CANDIDATES FOR MR. APOLLO'S **REPLACE-MENT** HERE, SIR...

HIRE THEM **ALL**--A **SUPER-ARMY** TO TRIUMPH OVER THE **SEVEN STARS**...AND **THE 'MASS!!**

WHAT NEXT? DON'T MISS THE THIRD CHAPTER OF OUR EXCITING SIX-PART NOVEL!!

SEND IT TO THE STARS

We look forward to receiving your electronic mail! Send it here: tothestars@knockabout.com

Top o' the morning to all you tenacious troopers out there in TEMPEST Town! Al and Kev here! As you know, we're both dedicated military war-gaming enthusiasts, and just the other day as we were sitting around our oubliette office-space — arranging our adjutants, setting up our sergeants and playing with our privates — we thought we'd have a butcher's at our rusting readers' response box! Blow us down if we didn't find ourselves deluged by, literally, about four mirthful missives from all you sterling Seven Stars-scrutinisers out there! Let's see what you had to say for yourselves!

Dear Al and Kev: Like, I'm sure, many of your schoolboy readers, I have a perfectly healthy interest in the planet Mars. I subsist entirely on Mars Bars, and am continually humming the 'Mars — the War Bringer' section from Gustav Holst's *The Planets*. A bit like the red planet with its god of war, who is also called Mars, I have a very florid complexion, and quite often I attack people. My favourite member of the Seven Stars is, of course, Zom of the Zodiac. Ha-ha! Only joking. It's Marsman really. Zom is like a weird old tramp. Anyway, my question is, why doesn't Marsman fight My Favourite Martian from the American television show and TV21 comic strip My Favourite Martian (despite his name, My Favourite Martian is not my favourite Martian, my favourite Martian actually being 'Husky' from Space Patrol)? And my other question is, wouldn't Marsman be a more scientifically realistic Martian character if he used his mind-powers to make Satin Astro take her bra off? Yours,

Morris "Mars Mental" Mullins, Peterborough

Morris, our dear old Dutch, insofar as you are representative of our broader readership, you are the reason we drink. As any normal boy your age would surely tell you, the best planet is Uranus, because it sounds like "your anus". So the next time you find yourself thinking about Mars, take a tip from your trustworthy tutors Al and Kev, and investigate Uranus instead.

Dear Al and Kev: Would it be possible for your cut-price Picasso to pay attention to detail in his so-called artwork? In the first four pages of Seven Stars chapter one, "The Coming of the Seven Stars", Vull the Invisible is wearing headphones, but on page five, panels six and seven, no headphones are to be seen! Can you explain this oversight, or in future, Matron permitting, do I have to add headphones in crayon?
Richard Breezeblock-Dada, Sad View Hospital, Broadmoor

If we had a penny for every time we've been asked that question, Richard, we'd have eightpence. The answer is simply that if he wants, all of Vull's helmet has the capacity to go invisible. Very often, if he's just standing around talking because his powers are of little practical use, Vull will routinely test the invisibility of various parts of his costume, and that's what he was doing with his headphones in panels six and seven. He uses the same power on our artist's signature each issue, if that's any consolation. What puzzles us is what the headphones are for in the first place. We can see that the lightbulb would be handy for reading in bed, and can only imagine that Vull likes to listen to the Home Service while battling evil-doers. Go figure, as we might well say if we were really the Americans that we're pretending to be.

Dear Al and Kev: After reading the Seven Stars and greatly admiring the Flash Avenger, I have taken up smoking to improve my image with girls and to relax after my cross-country run. My family has a long history of respiratory illness, but my passion is to fight crime while smoking like a chimney! Yet as my legs buckle under me and I cough and wheeze like my old Aunt Consumpta I have to ask — what brand does he smoke? My Woodbines appear to impede my progress and I recently failed my school physical. I'm smoking as fast and as many as I can, but they are not working. Help, please!

Roger (former four-minute man) Balustrade, Oxford Grange, Catford

Roger, our old pal, our old beauty, we were so intrigued by your nicotine-stained note that we put the question to the Flash Avenger himself. He took a breath to answer and then suffered a coughing fit that lasted for forty-five minutes, during which time he got all mucous down his waistcoat, before finally managing to gasp, "Capstan Full Strength, doncha know?", and then having to go for a sit down. But the thing is that throughout this ordeal, even during that tense couple of minutes when the paramedics had given up the ghost, he came across as really suave and cool, and the female members of the emergency services were all over him.

Dear Al and Kev: I am presently living in the future and do not understand why Zom turned that nice Mr. Tyme into a jukebox! What is a jukebox? I'm guessing it's a box to keep jukes in, but I don't know what jukes are, and they may have gone extinct before the future century I was born in. P.S. — Mr. Tyme, please rescue me. 2018 is horrible!

Little Lord Fauntleroy, Manson Block, Croydon

Strike a light, your Little Lordship, your ghastly future dystopia where there are no jukes sounds like a right blinking kettle of fish, and no mistake! Our perky post-historic pal Satin Astro says that if you can just hold on for the next nine hundred or so years, through the rise of the killer machines, the incessant alien invasions and the brutal empires of the humanoid animals, then in the 30th century there's a relatively stable period of living in totalitarian domed cities governed by the tyrannical Lord of Mars. So at least that's something to look forward to.

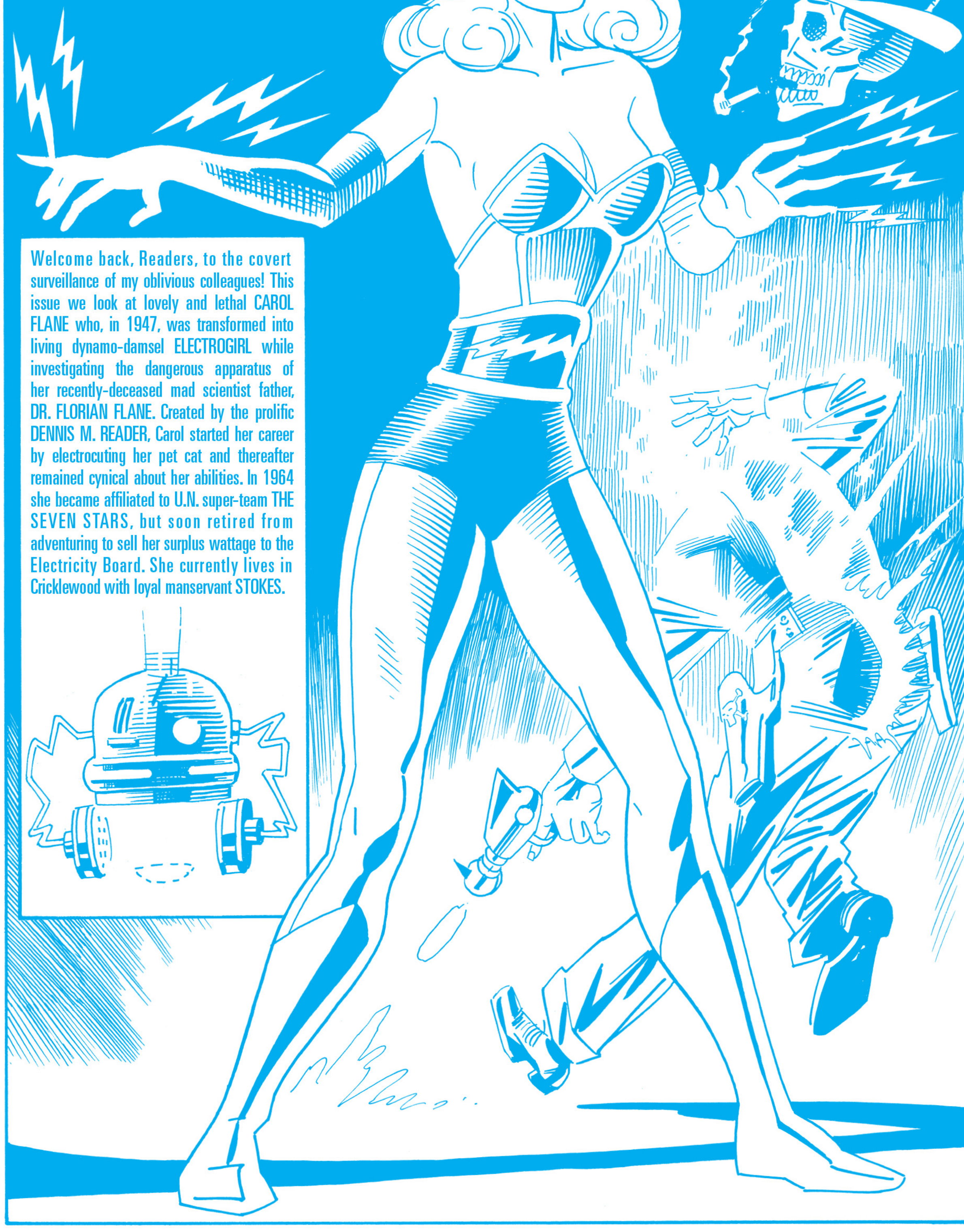
Well, that's all of your ebullient epistles we've got room for this time, so until next month's temper-testing TEMPEST it's a sorrowful sayonara from your clearly hallucinating head honchos —

Al and Kev

VULL'S VAULT OF VITAL STATISTICS No.2:

ELECTROGIRL

She's Drop Dead Gorgeous!



Welcome back, Readers, to the covert surveillance of my oblivious colleagues! This issue we look at lovely and lethal CAROL FLANE who, in 1947, was transformed into living dynamo-damsel ELECTROGIRL while investigating the dangerous apparatus of her recently-deceased mad scientist father, DR. FLORIAN FLANE. Created by the prolific DENNIS M. READER, Carol started her career by electrocuting her pet cat and thereafter remained cynical about her abilities. In 1964 she became affiliated to U.N. super-team THE SEVEN STARS, but soon retired from adventuring to sell her surplus wattage to the Electricity Board. She currently lives in Cricklewood with loyal manservant STOKES.

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The LEAGUE of EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

No. 3

Mina for Young Ladies

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KEVIN O'NEILL

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THE TEMPEST

A League LOOK-AND-LAMENT Feature: CHEATED CHAMPIONS OF YOUR CHILDHOOD

No. 3: MARIE DUVAL

Evening, all! Cartoon commissars Al and Kev here with a third serving of your textually tripped-out TEMPEST, which for some reason we've decided is an extinct British girls' picture weekly this issue. This had us in a proper two-and-eight trying to find a sole female creator in the annals of an industry traditionally dominated by lonely misogynists, until we tunnelled all the way back to the 19th century and unearthed the masterworks of the majestic Ms. Marie Duval!

Born to the poverty and clamour of Victorian London in 1847 as Isabella Emily Louisa Tessier, this energetic and enterprising talent, of whom no images are thought to exist and whose biographical details are ridiculously scant, began her stage career as Marie Duval, actor and performer with a promising side-line in cross-dressed leading men and principal boys. It was perhaps here that she commenced her relationship with playwright and stage manager Charles Ross – who was also a cartoonist, novelist and journal editor – and possibly through Ross that she became the popular-but-unsung cartoonist and illustrator whose work would usher in the world's first comic book.

Turning her lack of formal artistic training into an irrepressible try-anything advantage, Marie's bouncy slapstick images graced numerous cheap publications from the 1860s onward, most notably a Ross-edited rival to *Punch* magazine titled *Judy, the London Serio-comic Journal*. Here she channelled all the uproarious vulgar comedy of her music hall and theatre background into a cartoon style as captivating and experimental as any artist of her era, especially with her depiction of Ross-created archetypal workshy English drunk and early League cameo, Ally Sloper.

With her figures frequently turning to walking sticks, clothes-pegs or items of ironmongery, and with her occasional comic strips purportedly drawn by the inebriated and talentless Sloper himself, Marie contributed so much to the character's popularity that in 1884 he was awarded his own title, *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday,* arguably the first ever publication that could be called a comic. Her brilliance resting in her contrast between the idealised world of polite society and the often-delinquent world that she and her readers were more familiar with, Marie Duval flourished at a time when the idea of visual storytelling was in its infancy. Using the comic page as a stage for her wildly inventive performances, she staked out a unique territory as a giant of the fledgling medium and was then, seemingly, all but erased from its history. Dying in 1890 at the age of 43, she lies in Wandsworth Cemetery under the inscription "And the music died and the laughter ceased and there was silence".

Flipping Heck! Well, if that doesn't convince all the genuinely talented women out there to avoid the comic business other than making our tea and enduring the corrosive verbal abuse that we regard as a harmless bit of fun, we don't know what blinking well will! We'll see you here next time for more sequential sob-stories and historic offences from your casually castigating comrades —

Al and Kev

ALAN (The Writer) MOORE
KEVIN (The Artist) O'NEILL
BEN (The Colourist) DIMAGMALIW
TODD (The Letterer) KLEIN
CHRIS (The U.S. Publisher) STAROS
TONY (The U.K. Co-Publisher) BENNETT
JOSH (The U.K. Co-Publisher) PALMANO

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Pages 6-7 credits: Sayed Sattar Hasan - Jack Nemo; Catherine Nesbitt - Mina Murray; Tamsyn Payne - Costume, Make-up & Support; Joe Brown - Director, Photography & Graphic Design
3D Process by Charles Barnard & Christian LeBlanc

Lincoln Island, January 29th, 2010, 05:17 AM:

LISTEN, M.I.5 NUKED THE **BLAZING WORLD...**

WE SHOULD **GO** THERE.

MINA, PROSPERO **DISOWNED** US. ANYWAY, M.I.5 **ALSO** NUKED MY **POOL.**

I SAY WE GO TO **LONDON.**

FOR **REVENGE?** ORLANDO, PROSPERO MIGHT **NEED** US.

WITH RESPECT, YOU COULD DO **BOTH.**

MISS MURRAY, VIA NAUTILUS, TO THE **ARCTIC...**

...AND YOU, VIA ROBUR JET, TO **LONDON.**

SHALL I BE WITH THE **NAUTILUS,** NOW?

IT'S JUST, I'LL HAVE THE PINK CHILD ALONG.

I SHOULDN'T WANT ANY **UNPLEASANT-NESS.**

MR. COGHLAN, NUCLEAR **DEVASTATION** IS INVOLVED.

AS LONG AS SHE'S NOT **UPSET.** SHE'S...

I FEAR A VIOLENT **DAY,** THAT'S ALL.

I'M GOING TO LONDON WITH ORLANDO.

M.I.5 MURDERED MY **FRIENDS.**

I WAS AT **BOARDING SCHOOL** WITH THOSE WOMEN.

EMMA...

I pray thee, do not rise.

SCHOOL of NIGHT

Emma Night was the luckiest military-industrialist's daughter in the world, because she attended a school producing highly sexualised female espionage agents and ruthless assassins!

CLIFF HOUSE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

BIG BRO IS WATC YOU

EMMA AND HER CHUMS ARE IN THE CLIFF HOUSE **SICK BAY...**

:ACHOO!: SORRY, GIRLS. YOU'LL HAVE TO GO SPYING WITHOUT ME. MATRON SAYS I HAVE RUSSIAN **FLU.**

POOR CATHY. PATSY, SHOULD YOU BE **SMOKING?**

WELL, MISS ADLER **CONFISCATED** THE COCAINE.

JOIN THE JUNIOR ANTI-SEX LEAGUE TODAY

LATER, DURING P.E....

JOLLY STRANGE, CATHY CONTRACTING **RUSSIAN** FLU.

HMM. YOU'RE **RIGHT...** ESPECIALLY SINCE AIRSTRIP ONE HAS ALWAYS BEEN AT **WAR** WITH EURASIA.

I COULD ASK MY BROTHER. HE'S AT **GREYFRIARS,** WITH ALL THE **BOY** SPIES.

THOSE BASTARDS! ALWAYS GRABBING YOUR **TITS.**

TARSY'S **BROTHER** WOULDN'T. HE'S...

AH! GIRLS! VHERE IS MY FAVOURITE **CATHY** TODAY, VITH HER HONEY BLONDE HAIR CASCADING TO HER FRECKLED SHOULDERS?

UM... SHE'S OFF SICK, MISS KLEBB.

GIN

HORRORSHOW! I VAS JUST **CONCERNED.**

IT'S SWEET HOW MISS KLEBB IS SO CLOSE TO CATHY, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF CATHY'S **ATHLETIC** PROWESS.

HMM! MAYBE THAT **CLOSENESS** GAVE CATHY RUSSIAN **FLU.** WE SHOULD INVESTIGATE AFTER LIGHTS-OUT.

THAT NIGHT...

THAT'S ODD. THERE A LIGHT ON IN THE **GYM.**

STRICTLY NO BOYS

GYM

YES--AND WASTING ELECTRICITY IS **DOUBLE-PLUSUNGOOD!** LONG LIVE BIG BROTHER!

GIN

LONG... :HIC:... LONG LIVE BIG BROTHER!

BUT...

DA, COMRADE. OUR PLAN TO DIVIDE AIRSTRIP ONE FROM THE REVISIONIST **THINGMAKER** REGIME IN **OCEANIA** IS PROGRES-SING.

FIRST, WE DISCREDIT OCEANIAN **COMICAL-BOOKS...**

HOW BEASTLY! MISS KLEBB IS AN ENEMY **AGENT!** NO WONDER INGSOC IS, JUSTIFIABLY, CLOSING DOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

WELL, THE GAME'S **UP,** MISS KLEBB!

:GASP!: CAREFUL, EMMA! SHE'S EXTENDED A SWITCHBLADE FROM HER COMFORTABLY LOW-HEELED TENNIS SHOE!

PROB'LY... :URRP: PROB'LY POISHON-TIPPED! WHAT A ROTTEN BITCH!

ARRGHSKI!

LUCKILY, THANKS TO MISS KLEBB'S **P.E.** LESSONS, I'VE GOT DEADLY WEAPONS ON THE ENDS OF **MY** LEGS AS WELL!

DOUBLE-PLUSGOOD **SHOW,** EM! WAIT TILL I TELL BLAISE MINOR!

YEAH! KICK HER FUCKING HEAD IN!

STITCH **THIS,** YOU HAIRY-LE FLAT-CHE KNIFE-SHO LEATHER-F GINGER-H EURASIAN **SLAG!**

AAGH! JESUS CHRISTSKI!

EMMA, SNAP OUT OF IT. THE ROBUR STEALTH-FIGHTER IS OVER **KENT.** TIME TO TEST THESE **WING-SUITS.**

SORRY. MILES AWAY. IT'S **GRETA,** ISN'T IT?

GRETA **MORS,** JACK'S HALF-SISTER. OKAY, READY? ONE...TWO...

...THEN MISS KLEBB WAS TAKEN TO THE MINISTRY OF LOVE, SO SHE WON'T BE GETTING ON YOUR BACK ANYMORE, CATHY!

NO. SHE WON'T. THANKS AWFULLY.

LOOK! MISS ADLER RETURNED MY **DECONGESTANT!**

PATSY, YOU'RE UNDERAGE CH ALCOHOLIC CO ADDLED WHO I'LL TURN A **EYE**...LIKE PO MISS **KLEBB!**

YAH-HAH-HAH!

SEE EMMA DISABLE IN NEXT WEEK'S **MIN**

The TEMPEST

THREE: DAWN IS BUT DARK'S ENDEAVOUR

NO PARKING by ORDER

WHERE ARE WE?

BRADGATE, NEAR MY OLD SCHOOL. I'VE PROPERTY OFF THE PARK HERE THAT M.I.5 DON'T KNOW ABOUT.

WILL *MINA* BE ALL RIGHT?

WHAT, HEADED FOR AN IRRADIATED HYPER-DIMENSION WITH THE WORLD'S FOREMOST TERRORIST? HARD TO *SAY,* REALLY.

BLOODY HELL! THIS IS A BIT GROOVY, ISN'T IT?

IT IS *NOW.* WITH A SEVENTY-SOMETHING MOPING IN IT, IT WAS MORE *TRAGIC.*

SO, HOW SHALL WE KILL *JIMMY?*

HA! I LOVE MINA, BUT YOU'RE ANOTHER *PROFESSIONAL.*

I SAY WE KILL HIM AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE FOR VAPORISING MY *POOL.*

WITH ME, THE EMPHASIS IS MORE ON HIM ELIMINATING MY *FRIENDS,* BUT I AGREE.

WELL, YOU KNOW MORE ABOUT THIS SIXTIES *SUPER-SPY* BUSINESS THAN ME. WHERE SHOULD WE START?

WITH A *DRINK.* AFTER THAT, WE'LL GATHER *INFOR-MATION.*

WE CAN FIND OUT EVERYTHING ABOUT THE OPERA-TION HE'S RUNNING, THEN USE THAT TO *DESTROY* HIM.

I *KNOW* HIM. HE'S IMPOSSIBLY *VAIN,* AND THERE'S ONE AREA HE ALWAYS LEAVES *UNGUARDED.*

YEAH? SO, WHAT'S THIS OMNIPOTENT MAN'S *WEAK* SPOT?

WOMEN.

WE'RE TRUSTING AN AWFUL LOT TO THE NEW CAPTAIN NEMO, WHEN WE DON'T REALLY ***KNOW*** HIM.

SO, CAPTAIN...I'M SORRY. SO, JACK, WHO WAS THE WOMAN WHO ESCORTED EMMA AND ORLANDO TO ENGLAND?

GRETA? SHE'S THE DAUGHTER OF MY LATE MOTHER, HIRA, AND GENERAL MANFRED ***MORS,*** WHO IS STILL WITH US.

MUCH HAS CHANGED ON LINCOLN ISLAND SINCE LAST YOU VISITED.

IT CERTAINLY HAS. DIDN'T I HEAR A "NEW NAUTILUS" WAS TAKING US TO THE ARCTIC?

OH...WHY, YES. I HAVE MADE MANY ***IMPROVEMENTS.***

UNDOUBTEDLY...BUT COULDN'T WE ENTER THE BLAZING WORLD VIA ***MEGA-PATAGONIA,*** IN THE ***ANT***ARCTIC? IT'S MUCH NEARER.

MR. VAN DUSEN HAS ***INVESTI-GATED*** THAT POSSIBILITY.

MEGAPATAGONIA DISAPPEARED SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE ARCTIC ***EXPLOSION.*** SOME RADIOACTIVE DOGMAN ***CORPSES*** HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED.

SO THE ARCTIC IT ***IS.*** BUT PLEASE, THROUGH HERE...

...THERE IS SOMETHING THAT I WISHED YOU TO ***SEE.***

A PIANO? DO YOU ***PLAY?***

A LITTLE. YOU SEE, I AM UNLIKE MY GRANDMOTHER OR HER FATHER.

I ***CREATE.*** I DO NOT ONLY ***DESTROY.***

YOU KNOW, EVEN AFTER ALL THE VAMPIRES, MARTIANS AND MAGICIANS, A NEMO WITH A ***HOBBY*** IS THE UNLIKELIEST IDEA I'VE EVER HEARD.

COULD YOU PLAY ME SOMETHING?

YES...BUT PERHAPS NOT TERRIBLY ***WELL.*** TO BE HONEST, I'D HOPED THAT SIMPLY ***OWNING*** A PIANO MIGHT IMPRESS YOU.

AS OPPOSED TO OWNING AN ISLAND ***NATION?***

HM. FAIR POINT. NOW, LET ME SEE... AH, YES...

♪ *DIDN'T GET BITTEN IN NO CARPATHIAN TOWER...* ♪

♪ *...OR EAT THE PEACHES FROM SOME HEAVENLY BOWER,* ♪
♪ *BUT OH, MY DARLING, I'M CERTAIN OF OUR...* ♪

AH. BUT THAT SONG WAS OF YOU AND MR. QUATERMAIN, SO RECENTLY PASSED.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME. IN EMOTIONAL MATTERS, I'M SOMETHING OF A NOVICE.

JACK, DON'T APOLOGISE. IT WAS A VERY SWEET CHOICE. I REALLY DIDN'T MIND...

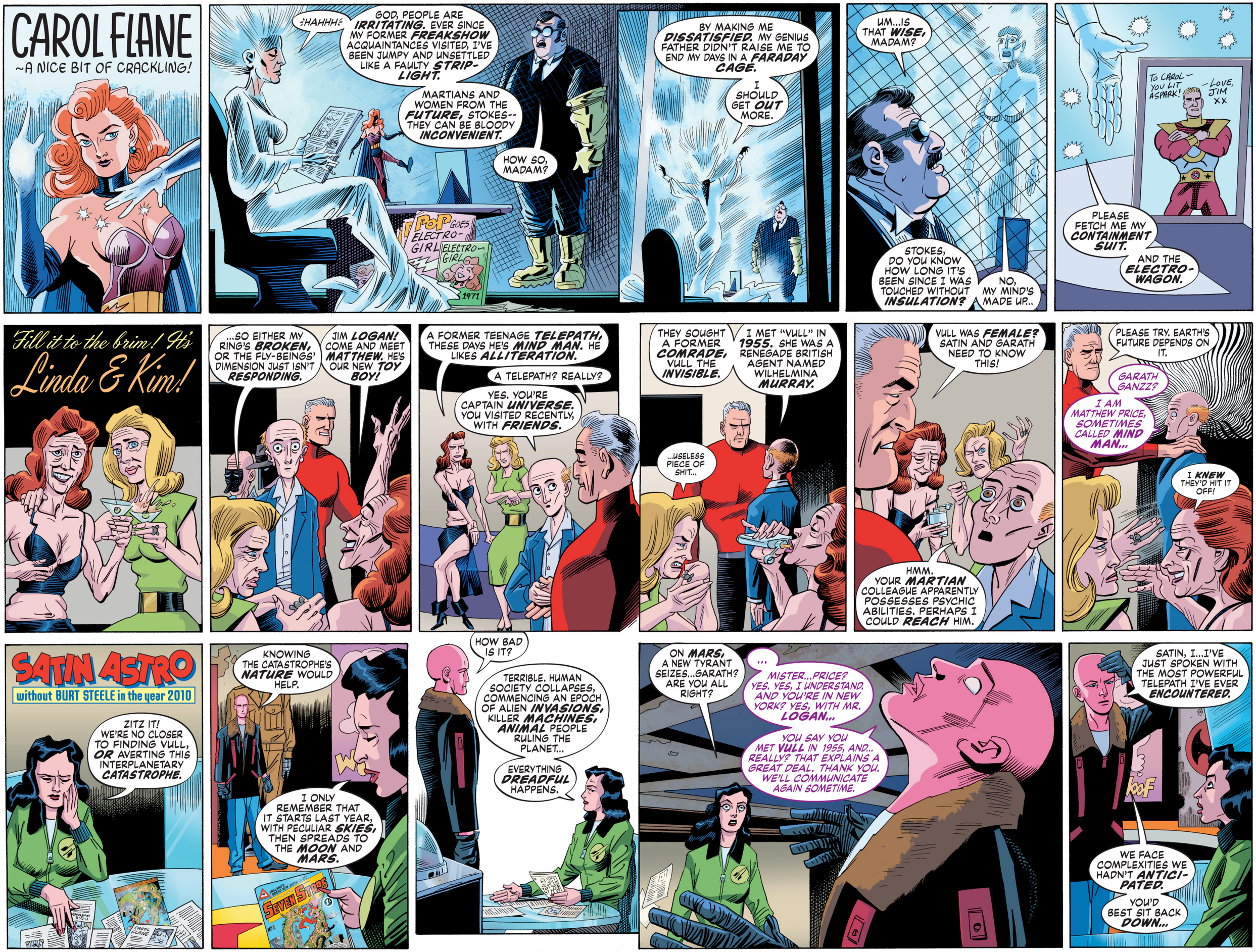
YOU ARE TOO GENEROUS...AND WE HAVE MUCH TO ***PREPARE.***

THE...NEW NAUTILUS MUST BE EQUIPPED FOR ITS POLAR TRANSIT. THE THINKING MACHINE AND LENI ***MABUSE*** CAN RUN LINCOLN DURING THIS CRITICAL PERIOD...

CRITICAL?

CERTAINLY.

IF MR. VAN DUSEN'S ***FORECASTS*** ARE CORRECT, OUR PLANET'S MUSIC OF EVENTS APPROACHES A ***CRESCENDO.***


CAROL FLANE
~A NICE BIT OF CRACKLING!
HAHHH
GOD, PEOPLE ARE IRRITATING. EVER SINCE MY FORMER FREAKSHOW ACQUAINTANCES VISITED, I'VE BEEN JUMPY AND UNSETTLED LIKE A FAULTY STRIP-LIGHT.
MARTIANS AND WOMEN FROM THE FUTURE, STOKES-- THEY CAN BE BLOODY INCONVENIENT.
HOW SO, MADAM?
POP GOES ELECTRO-GIRL
ELECTRO-GIRL
1971
BY MAKING ME DISSATISFIED. MY GENIUS FATHER DIDN'T RAISE ME TO END MY DAYS IN A FARADAY CAGE.
I SHOULD GET OUT MORE.
UM...IS THAT WISE, MADAM?
STOKES, DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG IT'S BEEN SINCE I WAS TOUCHED WITHOUT INSULATION?
NO, MY MIND'S MADE UP...
TO CAROL - YOU LIT ASPARK!
- LOVE, JIM XX
PLEASE FETCH ME MY CONTAINMENT SUIT.
AND THE ELECTRO-WAGON.
Fill it to the brim! It's Linda & Kim!
...SO EITHER MY RING'S BROKEN, OR THE FLY-BEINGS' DIMENSION JUST ISN'T RESPONDING.
JIM LOGAN! COME AND MEET MATTHEW. HE'S OUR NEW TOY BOY!
A FORMER TEENAGE TELEPATH, THESE DAYS HE'S MIND MAN. HE LIKES ALLITERATION.
A TELEPATH? REALLY?
YES. YOU'RE CAPTAIN UNIVERSE. YOU VISITED RECENTLY, WITH FRIENDS.
THEY SOUGHT A FORMER COMRADE, VULL THE INVISIBLE.
I MET "VULL" IN 1955. SHE WAS A RENEGADE BRITISH AGENT NAMED WILHELMINA MURRAY.
...USELESS PIECE OF SHIT...
VULL WAS FEMALE? SATIN AND GARATH NEED TO KNOW THIS!
HMM. YOUR MARTIAN COLLEAGUE APPARENTLY POSSESSES PSYCHIC ABILITIES. PERHAPS I COULD REACH HIM.
PLEASE TRY. EARTH'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.
GARATH GANZZ?
I AM MATTHEW PRICE, SOMETIMES CALLED MIND MAN...
I KNEW THEY'D HIT IT OFF!
SATIN ASTRO
without BURT STEELE in the year 2010
ZITZ IT! WE'RE NO CLOSER TO FINDING VULL, OR AVERTING THIS INTERPLANETARY CATASTROPHE.
KNOWING THE CATASTROPHE'S NATURE WOULD HELP.
I ONLY REMEMBER THAT IT STARTS LAST YEAR, WITH PECULIAR SKIES, THEN SPREADS TO THE MOON AND MARS.
SEVEN STARS
HOW BAD IS IT?
TERRIBLE. HUMAN SOCIETY COLLAPSES, COMMENCING AN EPOCH OF ALIEN INVASIONS, KILLER MACHINES, ANIMAL PEOPLE RULING THE PLANET...
EVERYTHING DREADFUL HAPPENS.
ON MARS, A NEW TYRANT SEIZES...GARATH? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
...
MISTER...PRICE? YES. YES, I UNDERSTAND. AND YOU'RE IN NEW YORK? YES, WITH MR. LOGAN...
YOU SAY YOU MET VULL IN 1955, AND... REALLY? THAT EXPLAINS A GREAT DEAL. THANK YOU. WE'LL COMMUNICATE AGAIN SOMETIME.
SATIN, I...I'VE JUST SPOKEN WITH THE MOST POWERFUL TELEPATH I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED.
WE FACE COMPLEXITIES WE HADN'T ANTICI-PATED.
YOU'D BEST SIT BACK DOWN...

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN!

CLOCKING OUT, LADIES?

TELL YOU WHAT--I SHAN'T BE NEEDING YOU AT ALEMBIC HOUSE LATER, SO WHY DON'T YOU BOTH TAKE THE NIGHT OFF?

ME AND THE LADS ARE BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL, DECIDING ON OUR NEXT ***TARGET.***

TO BE HONEST, I'M LIKING THIS RABBIT-HOLE IN ***OXFORD...***

Wh-who...?

IT'S ***HER.*** IT'S MS. NIGHT.

I--I'VE SEEN ***PHOTOGRAPHS,*** WHEN SHE WAS ***YOUNGER.***

B-BUT HOW...?

DOESN'T MATTER.

I'M BETTING YOU PREFERRED ***ME*** TO YOUR ***CURRENT*** BOSS?

EXACTLY.

LISTEN, IF YOU HELP ***ME,*** I CAN GET YOU ***OUT*** OF THIS.

R-REALLY?

H-HE TREATS US LIKE *LIVESTOCK.*

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

INFORMATION. HOW'S ***M.I.5?***

W-WELL, M'S AWAY WITH THE ***J*** AGENTS MOSTLY.

POOR MR. ***KING'S*** RUNNING THINGS.

KING...WAS HE IN ***S*** DIVISION?

I--I THINK SO. M BULLIES HIM DREADFULLY.

THANK YOU. THAT'S EXCELLENT NEWS.

NOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO ***DO...***

USING OFFICIAL **CHANNELS,** HAVE A REMOVAL SERVICE COLLECT MY SPECIAL ARCHIVE'S ENTIRE **CONTENTS.**

HAVE THEM DELIVERED TO A MS. GRETA **MORS** AT THIS ADDRESS IN **KENT.**

ARRANGE THIS **TONIGHT.**

THEN, CARRYING ANY **ESSENTIALS,** MAKE FOR THE SAME PLACE **YOURSELVES.**

OH, AND PACK AS IF FOR A LONG SOUTH PACIFIC **HOLIDAY.**

ANY QUESTIONS?

...LORDE, WITH HER PROVOCATIVE NEW RELEASE "ALL THESE YEARS I'VE SECRETLY BEEN RANDY."

COMING UP NEXT, IT'S A CHANGE OF DIRECTION FOR THE RECENTLY REFORMED **TRINKS** AND "NUTELLA DUSK"...

KK4976

I WISH MY WIFE WAS THIS DIRTY

ACTUALLY, MATE, SHE IS.

KK4976

IS YOUR SPECIAL ARCHIVE THE **ROOM** I SAW?

YES, MY **MURRAY GROUP** SOUVENIRS.

THERE'S EDWARD HYDE'S SKELETON; POSSIBLY HIS **DNA.**

SO, NEXT WE LOCATE MR. **KING.**

Y'KNOW, I'M STARTING TO **ENJOY** THIS OUTLAW BUSINESS.

I WONDER HOW **MINA'S** DOING?

KK4976

OH. HELLO. I WAS JUST LOOKING OUT AT THE SEA OF FROZEN **WORDS.** I WASN'T EXPECTING A **POLAR** ROUTE TO THE BLAZING WORLD.

WE'VE NOT BEEN INTRODUCED. YOU'RE **TACARIGUA,** IS THAT RIGHT?

PREFER "MR. ISHMAEL."

ARCTIC CROSSING'S **NECESSARY.** BLAZING WORLD'S SOUTHERLY APPROACH, NEARER THE ORKNEYS, THAT'S **DEVASTATED** LIKE MEGAPATAGONIA: COOKED ANIMAL MEN FLOATING EVERYWHERE.

ALSO, CAPTAIN WANTED TO DOCK AT **TOYLAND** FOR A **SITUATION** UPDATE.

YOU KNEW MY GRANDFATHER, YES?

THE FIRST MR. ISHMAEL? YES. I MET HIM IN 1897 WHEN BRITISH INTELLIGENCE DESPATCHED ME TO **LINCOLN.**

LINCOLN'S **CHANGED.** MORE **WOMEN** IN COMMAND, FOR ONE THING.

CAPTAIN **JANNI** STARTED THAT. THE CURRENT NEMO **CONTINUES** IT.

ARKADIN Ind. MUNITION

YES, I MET GRETA **MORS,** LENI **MABUSE** AND KATHY **KIDD.** THEY SEEMED HAPPY IN THEIR WORK.

MR. ISHMAEL, CAN I ASK...ARE YOU IN A **RELATIONSHIP** WITH THE CAPTAIN?

YES. HE'S NEMO. I'M MR. ISHMAEL.

SO, A **PROFESSIONAL** RELATIONSHIP. YOU'RE NOT...

FUCKING HIM? THE CAPTAIN'S THE GREATEST **MARAUDER** THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN, BUT AS A **LOVER?**

HE WOULD **DROWN** IN ME. HIS LITTLE MATCHSTICK BODY WOULD NEVER BE FOUND.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, MS. MURRAY, WE'RE NEARING TOYLAND. I HAVE TO ORGANISE THE CAPTAIN'S **LANDING PARTY.**

O-OF COURSE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, MR. ISHMAEL.

AND PLEASE...YOU MUST CALL ME **MINA.**

WONDER

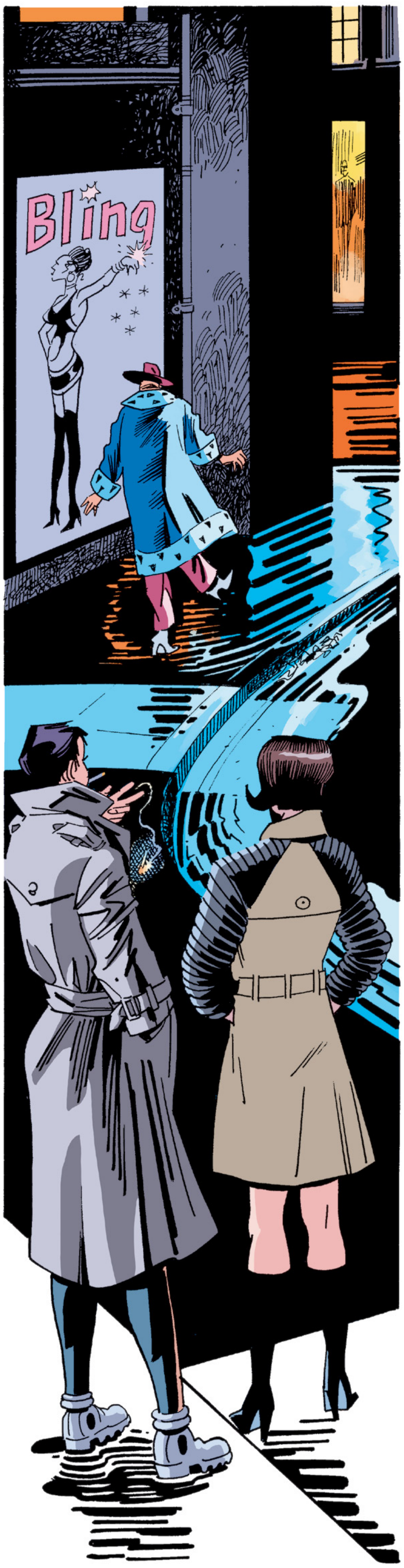
PREFER "MS. MURRAY."

We found agent King, as I'd predicted, out for a nostalgic and morose stroll around Piccadilly Circus in the February rain with gaudy slugs of neon crawling on his patent leather shoes. "Why, Jason, darling, it's been simply ages," I announced convivially and watched the colour draining from his florid cheeks. He knew. He knew why I was there to talk to him and, huddled beneath Eros, wept in shame.

The very capable Orlando helped me march him to a nearby dive where we had previously bribed the owner, herding the unsteady and continually apologising operational director through the glistening London night. It all seemed rather desperate and brutal. Forty-something years back John and I would have done all of this by daylight in my Lotus or his Bentley, trading repartee and foiling some conspiracy involving brainwashing or robots.

We got King drunk and he told us everything – how the girls had been killed before his appointment; how when he'd found out he was too frightened to do anything. His nerves were shot, but then the Sixties were harrowing. I remember when we heard what had happened to Drake, or about David Callan executing his commanding officer. Agents back then, our lives were like paranoid and hallucinatory comic-strips.

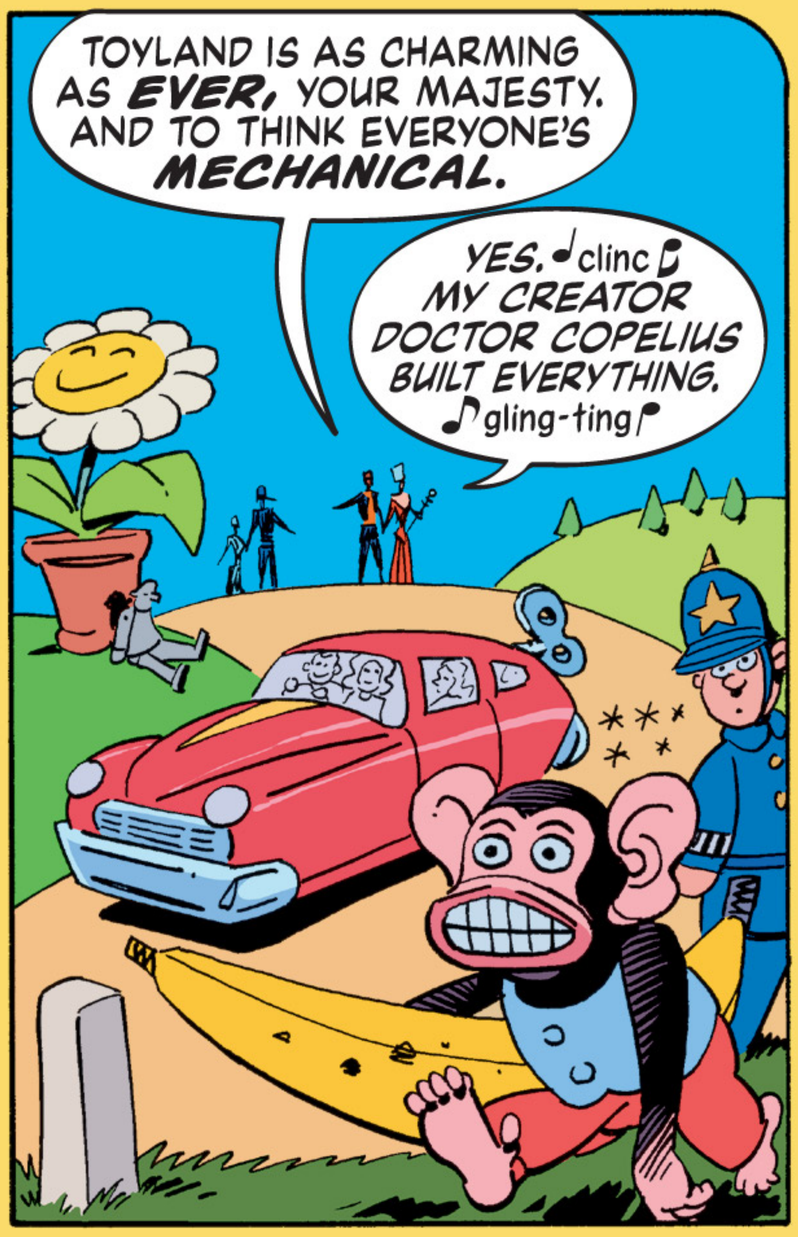
You could drown in a four-foot-wide monsoon, have whole communities vanish except for their milk-floats, or lose your mind in dead men's houses. No wonder so many of us ended up as anxious, flinching shadows like poor Mr. King. I told him what he had to do to make amends — he knew what for — and though he sobbed some more, he swore most solemnly he definitely would.

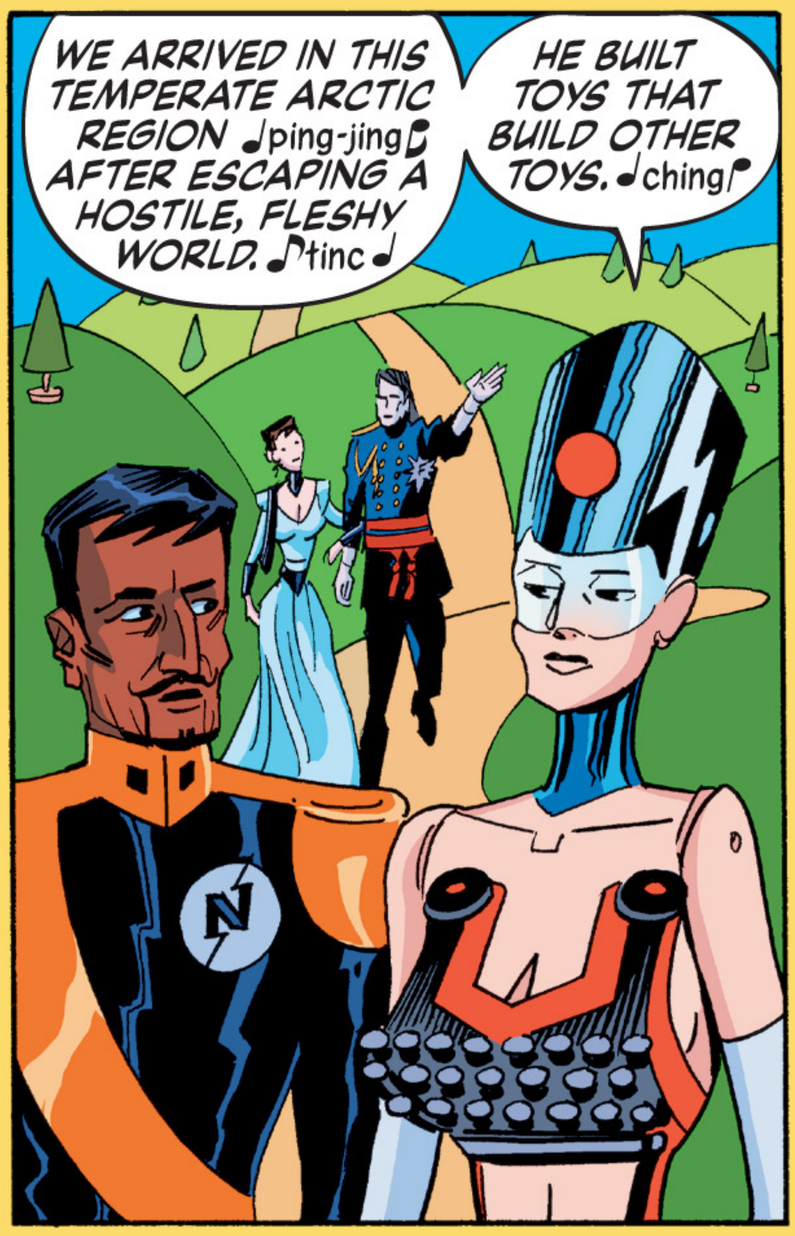


His fate thus decided, he couldn't shut up, babbling a great stream of intelligence in what I suppose was relief from the guilty hell he'd been living with. He mentioned proposed assaults on an Oxford college deanery or ruins in County Galway, and the imminent appearance of one Andrew Norton in Hackney. His confessional at last exhausted, the two of us watched him stumble away into this city's ancient darkness.

Sparing us a journey back to Kent, Orlando walked me to Fitzrovia and a subterranean complex linking Nightmore Street with Little Monmouth Street. Apparently, she, Mina and their late companion Allan Quatermain have made this their headquarters since the Sixties. She said I should feel at home amongst the other period pop memorabilia. Back then we were almost children, weren't we, at play in a decade like a marvellous nursery?

Just arrived in Toyland, Mina, Jack and their chums are given a splendid reception by Toyland's tinkle-voiced clockwork Queen Olympia and her consort, the gloomy old Duke of Frankenstein. The Pink Child frolics delightedly while the grownups chatter.





And what a lovely jamboree it is, in Olympia's palatial dollhouse where ambassadors from Polar Bear Kingdom and Cristal-lopolis waltz to the wind-up band, and Mina finds herself in a gavotte with the Queen's regal consort, Toyland's melancholy Duke.

THAT'S BETTER.

YOU AND OLYMPIA SEEM ***HAPPY*** TOGETHER.

OUR CREATORS KNEW EACH OTHER. WHEN MINE HOUNDED ME HERE, WE MET. LIFE BECAME ENDURABLE.

I WAS AT FIRST LONELY AMONGST ONLY TOYS, IT'S TRUE.

BUT OLYMPIA ORDERED THE CONSTRUCTION OF ***OTHER*** FRANKEN-STEINS, THAT I SHOULD HAVE COMPANY.

OTHER ***FRANKEN-STEINS?***

MOST PEOPLE INSIST THAT IT'S YOUR ***CREATOR*** WHO SHOULD BE CALLED FRANKENSTEIN, WHILE YOU SHOULD BE REFERRED TO AS FRANKENSTEIN'S ***MONSTER.***

AND WHAT, THAT'S SUPPOSED TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER, IS IT?

At party's end our merry travellers are wearily escorted back to Captain Jack's astounding submarine by the well-mannered royal couple, who know our intrepid crew have a big day ahead of them, seeking whatever's left of the Blazing World.

FAREWELL, CAPTAIN. ♪ pling ♪

HOPEFULLY ***THIS*** EXPEDITION SHALL RETURN NEWS FROM THE LAND OF STORIES.

THERE HAVE BEEN ***OTHER*** EXPEDI-TIONS?

OF COURSE. ♪ shring ♪

OUR NOBLE GALLEY-WAG AND HIS DUTCH CONCUBINES SAILED IN THEIR ***ROSE OF NOWHERE*** TWO DAYS SINCE. ♪ klitting ♪ WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING FROM THEM.

♪ dom dom dom ♪

Through glimmering polar dusk the *Nautilus* puts once more out onto the ice-jewelled brine, and all aboard have butterflies inside their tummies for the safety of their baryonic pal, all wondering what awaits them in the Blazing World.

SO YOU'RE SAYING VULL THE INVISIBLE WAS A WOMAN?

WOOF

ACCORDING TO MY AMERICAN TELEPATH, THE ***FIRST*** VULL WAS A MALE BRITISH SUPER-CRIMINAL OF THE ***1930s.***

THIS WOMAN MURRAY--WHOSE NAME WE FOUND IN THOSE FILES--KILLED HIM AND COMMANDEERED HIS INVISIBILITY HELMET.

WOOF

WELL, GENDER DOESN'T MATTER. WE STILL NEED VULL.

CAROL AND JIM WON'T HELP US AVERT WHATEVER CATASTROPHE IS COMING, AND VULL WAS ALWAYS THE BRAINS BEHIND THE SEVEN STARS.

EARTH'S ***OTHER*** SUPERHUMANS CAN'T BE RELIED ON EITHER. JIM'S FILM-FRAGMENT SUGGESTS THEY'RE MOSTLY ***PROPAGANDA*** EXERCISES.

SATIN, I FEAR FOR MARS.

YOUR OCCLUDED MEMORIES OF THE 30th CENTURY SUGGEST A MARTIAN WARLORD DOMINATING THE SOLAR SYSTEM, HIS DYNASTY ESTABLISHED HERE, IN 2010.

GARATH, AS I SAID, THE SCALE OF THE DISASTER IS ALMOST ***INCONCEIVABLE.*** IT ENVELOPS THE MOON, MARS, VENUS...

A PERFECT ***STORM.***

WOOF

BUT EVEN IF ***EVERYONE*** ASSISTED US, IS CHANGING THE FUTURE ***POSSIBLE?*** IT'S...

...SHARE A CERTAIN POP-ART SENSIBILITY. I'M...

⁘

GARATH--

THERE'S NO ONE HERE BUT YOU.

"OH... THAT'S ODD. I THOUGHT I...

...SAW...

LEAVE HIM **ALONE,** YOU MOTHER-ZITZER!

THIS **GONE-GUN** CAN NEGATE YOUR MOLECULAR **VALENCY...**

REALLY? WELL, THIS **BERETTA** CAN PROPEL A SIMPLE LEAD PROJECTILE THROUGH THE CENTRE OF YOUR **BRAIN.**

?

SO, UM...

...INTRODUCTIONS, ANYBODY?

...IS MR. COGHLAN, MR. ISHMAEL AND CAPTAIN NEMO, WHILE THIS IS MR. ENGELBRECHT, ALONG WITH PEG, SARAH-JANE AND THEIR PARAMOUR, THE ILLIMITABLE GALLEY-WAG.

BREAD AND TITS, FLUORESCENT COMMODORE OF INFINITY. D-DID THE NUCLEAR BLAST HAVE NO EFFECT? OTHER THAN THIS DISCOLOURATION, THE BLAZING WORLD SEEMS ALMOST UNHARMED.

BREAD AND TITS TO THEE, ENCHANTER OF LOINS. MY BESTIMATION IS, THESE BLISTERIN' TERRISTORIES BE REFIGMENTING THEYSELVES. FRIEND ENGELBRECHT KINFIDES THAT PRECENTLY, THEY'M WERE EVAPILATED!

QUITE! I'D BEEN AWAY, SHOOTING THE BREEZE AND WINGING A TORNADO. EVERYTHING WAS ATOMISED, BUT NOW IT'S REFORMING. THE RADIOACTIVITY IS DRAINING OFF INTO HYPER-SPACE.

WHY, YES. WITH THESE SPARE GLASSES THAT THE PINK CHILD LOANED US, I CAN SEE THE PARTICLES HURTLING BACKWARDS TO A SINGLE POINT AND VANISHING.

BRIGAND OF THE SUBLIME, WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE? EVEN THE BLAZING WORLD'S DIMENSIONAL STATE SEEMS TO BE FLUCTUATING AS WE PROGRESS FURTHER IN...

WHY-AYE! THE VEERY WHEREFOLD AND WHENBENDERY O' THIS UNSTABLISHMENT SNUFFERED MOST FOURFULL DOOMAGE FROM THE ATOMBOOM, AN' MUST DESMASHIFY ITSALF!

YES, I'M AFRAID SPACETIME GOT A BIT BLOWN UP. I WAS RACING AGAINST THE CLOCK YESTERDAY, AND IT PASSED ME GOING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

WELL, FOR SAYIN' IT'S LATELY BEEN EXPLODED, THE PLACE SEEMS TO BE RECUPERATIN'. STILL, I'M GLAD WE LEFT HER PINKNESS BACK ABOARD YER SUBMARINE.

AGREED. MUCH HERE IS AS YET UNEXPLAINED. ILLUSTRIOUS GALLEY-WAG, WHAT OF THE MANY DEATHS REPORTED AT THIS KINGDOM'S SOUTHERLY APPROACH, OR OFF IN MEGAPATAGONIA?

WELL, DEATH'S QUITE EASY TO CHEAT, WITH THE POOR FELLOW HAVING NO EYEBALLS. I WAS DICING WITH HIM THE OTHER DAY, AND WON HIS SCYTHE!

IT BE MY THUNDER-STANDIN' THAT EVEN FLATALITIES AND THE INCINDERATED DEAD ARE AT THIS MEREMENT UNDER-GLOWING RIZZERUCTION, ALL BRUNG BACK TO LIFELIHOOD BY ESOTERRORISM!

BY MY UNFERNAL PLUCK, BOLD ENGELBRECHT! SO YE'VE BESWIPED MORDALITY HIMSALF O' HIS CEMETRIFYIN' SCISSOR? WHAT SHALL YE BE DRUIN' WITH IT?

HAVEN'T A CLUE. THE QUESTION IS SURELY WHAT DEATH WILL BE DOING WITH-OUT IT? I SUPPOSE HE'LL JUST HAVE TO STRANGLE EVERYBODY.

I STILL DON'T SEE HOW THE BLAZING WORLD AND ITS INHABITANTS CAN HAVE...I DON'T KNOW... REBUILT THEMSELVES AFTER A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST. UNLESS...

AH, YES. OF COURSE. THIS IS THE DUKE OF MILAN'S DOING, ISN'T IT? ARE YOU TAKING US TO MEET WITH PROSPERO?

WAAL, IT MIGHT BE AS YE CAN ABSERVE YER DUKE O' FLUKE, THOUGH HE'M BE TOO PREOCCULPIED FER ANY CONVERSAY-SO.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IS HE...OH, MY WORD! LOOK AT THESE FAIRIES AND FICTO-FOLK. SURELY THEY HAVEN'T ***ALL*** RETURNED FROM THE DEAD?

YES-- LOGIC'S BOWLED A BIT OF A ***GOOGLY!*** WE SHOULD ASK THAT ***OWL MAN.*** THEY'RE FAMOUSLY WISE FOR CREATURES WHOSE SKULLS ARE MOSTLY ***EYE-SOCKET.***

UM...E-EXCUSE ME, SIR NIGHT-RAVEN, BUT MY FRIENDS AND I ARE RECENTLY ***ARRIVED*** WITH NO IDEA WHAT'S ***HAPPENING.***

WE'D THOUGHT THE BLAZING WORLD ***DESTROYED*** IN A NUCLEAR ***BOM-BARDMENT.***

HOOO, YES! IT WAS HOOORRIFIC. A GREAT BURNING WIND RUSHED THROOO THE LAND, AND BLHOOO OUR DUST AND BONES AWAY.

TH-THEN HOW CAN YOU OR ANY OF THIS STILL ***BE*** HERE?

IT IS TRHOOO. NOT TWHOOO DAYS SINCE, I WAS MYSELF BUT ASHES, YET I AM NOW MADE ***ANHOOO.***

THIS IS LORD ***PROSPERO'S*** DHOOOING. FOLLOW ME AND I SHALL TAKE YOOU TOOOO HIM.

THANK YOU. SO YOU ACTUALLY REMEMBER DYING IN A NUCLEAR BLAST?

IT WAS SOOOON OVER. MY ***RECONSTITOOOTION*** WAS SLOWER AND MORE PAINFUL.

THIS WHOOOLE CITADEL WAS WITHIN THE FIREBALL THEN, BUT THE EXPLOSION HAS BEEN GREATLY ***REDOOOCED.***

R-REDUCED? YOU MEAN IT'S STILL GOING ***ON?***

YES. THIS IS WHAT LORD PROSPERO HAS ***LIMITED*** IT TOOOO.

GOOD LORD. THIS VAST CHAMBER FULL OF ***BRILLIANCE...*** IS THE DETONATION SOMEHOW IN ***HERE?***

HE HAS STOOD MOTIONLESS FOR ***DAYS,*** GRADUALLY DWINDLING THE ATROCITY FROM ***VIEOOO.***

DEAR GOD, LOOK AT THAT.

WH-WHAT'S HE ***DOING?***

HE IS REVERSING THE EXPLOSION'S *TIME.*

HE IS *UNHAPPENING* IT.

GORBLINDUS! *SO* ***THAT'S*** *WHAT NODDEGAMRA CIMOTA--ATOMIC ARMAGEDDON BACKWARDS-- LOOKS LIKE! WATCH OUT FOR MORE TWISTS AND TURNS IN YOUR NEXT TORRID AND TANTALISING* ***TEMPEST!***

SEVEN STARS

ATTACKED BY A RIVAL TEAM OF THIRD-RATE BRITISH ULTRA-DIVS, OUR PALS SEEK SOLITUDE IN STARLIGHT! DON'T MISS OUR SIX-PART SAGA'S THIRD CHAPTER...

"SHOWDOWN IN SPACE!"

THEIR FITZROVIA HIDEOUT BREACHED, THE SEVEN STARS ROCKET TO SOME-WHERE MORE **SECURE**...

MY **SPACE-BASE** WILL BE SAFE AGAINST INTRUDERS. I HOPE YOU LOCKED OUR LONDON **STAR-CHAMBER,** VULL!

DON'T WORRY! I DOUBLE-CHECKED EVERYTHING!

HUMPH! WISH **I'D** DOUBLE-CHECKED BEFORE ROMANCING MISS SNAP, CRACKLE AND POP HERE, DONCHA KNOW!

DAVID, I'VE APOLOGISED ABOUT THE BURNS UNIT...

GREAT DANGLING **DEIMOS!** CAPTAIN UNIVERSE, I-IS YONDER ORBITING STRUCTURE TRULY YOUR INTER-PLANETARY **FORTRESS?**

IT IS **NOW!** ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED BY A DEVIANT **AMERICAN** SUPERHUMAN, LET'S JUST SAY I **INHERITED** IT FROM HIM!

IT'S A HOLLOW ARTIFICIAL **SUN** SITUATED HERE IN THE **OORT CLOUD,** A BUSTLING COMET-NURSERY AT THE FURTHEST LIMITS OF OUR **SOLAR SYSTEM.**

CAPACIOUS ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A WHOLE NATION IF NEED BE, I'VE RE-CHRISTENED IT **THE UNIVERSARIUM!**

I'LL JUST DOCK THIS **UNI-CRUISER,** THEN I CAN SHOW YOU **AROUND.**

CAPTAIN, BY **3000 AD** THE OORT CLOUD IS A LEGENDARY **SPACE PIRATE** SANCTUARY!

REALLY? I GUESS A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN A THOUSAND YEARS!

STILL, FOR THE MOMENT, LET'S GET YOU ALL ACQUAINTED WITH OUR TEMPORARY **HEADQUARTERS.**

BIT OF A HAUL FROM **FITZROVIA,** ISN'T IT, OLD BEAN?

THAT'S **TRUE,** FLASH AVENGER, BUT AS YOU KNOW OUR LONDON BASE WAS INVADED BY THE INTRUDER WHO ELECTROGIRL **KILLED** AND WHO ZOM THEN TRANSFORMED INTO A **JUKEBOX.** THAT GOVERNMENT TEAM, **THE VICTORY VANGUARD,** IS UP TO SOMETHING, AND AFTER OUR RECENT FIASCO WITH TOBY THE FAT **SCHOOLBOY** WE'D BETTER KEEP OUR **DISTANCE!**

WELL **SAID,** COSMOLOGICAL CAPTAIN. YOUR UNIVERSARIUM IS INDEED WONDERFUL. THESE SCREENS SHOW UNKNOWN DIMENSIONS...OF THE **ZODIAC!**

CAPITAL! IF YOU SPOT ANY ALIEN **CRUMPET,** LET ME KNOW!

DAVID, LET'S **DATE** AGAIN. YOU COULD WEAR **RUBBER...**

NOT RUDDY **LIKELY!** LIKE TAKING A BATH WITH YOUR COAT ON.

SORRY, OLD GEL. IT'S ONCE **ELECTROCUTED,** TWICE **SHY,** I'M AFRAID.

=CHOKE= I--I UNDERSTAND.

CAROL (ELECTROGIRL) FLANE REFLECTS TEARFULLY ON HER SHORT-CIRCUITED LOVE-LIFE...

"DRATTED ELECTRICITY! IT'S COME BETWEEN ME AND THOSE I LOVE SINCE IT TOOK MY BELOVED FATHER, DR. FLORIAN FLANE, AWAY FROM ME!"

OH, DADDY! YOUR CRAZY DREAM OF HARNESSING BIO-ELECTRICITY HAS PREMATURELY **CREMATED** YOU!

"WONDERING WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I FIDDLED WITH THE MACHINE THAT HAD INCINERATED DAD, I RECEIVED **ELECTRICAL POWERS** AND ACCIDENTALLY FLASH-FRIED MY DARLING **CAT!**"

DR. FLANE

POOR BUSTER! MY TEARS ONLY EXACERBATE YOUR SUFFERING!

YOWWRRR!

SPZAK!

"BECOMING ELECTROGIRL, ALTHOUGH MY COSTUME ATTRACTED MANY ADMIRERS, NONE GREW CLOSE TO ME."

L-LOOK CAROL, IT'S NOT **YOU.** I-IT'S **US.**

"DESPERATELY LONELY, I EVEN FLIRTED WITH **ARCH-ENEMIES.**"

...BUT UNFORTUNATELY, MY SURGE OF AFFECTION FOR **NORTH SEA GAS MAN** ACTED AS A **PILOT LIGHT...**

"THESE DAYS, I ONLY RECEIVE ADVANCES FROM DOOMED CONVICTS."

RIP BUSTER
1946-1947

Dear Miss flane, I'm on Death Row in Texas and I want to die sitting in your lap. Yours, Otis Lee Turner

THE DEEP VOICE OF JIM (CAPTAIN UNIVERSE) LOGAN SNAPS CAROL BACK FROM HER REVERIE...

PROBLEMS FINDING A **BEAU,** CAROL? SINCE I ALSO COMMAND ELECTROMAGNETISM--

--PERHAPS WE COULD HAVE DRINKS AFTER **WORK** SOMETIME?

OH, JIM! YOU **BET!**

I--I MEAN, I'LL HAVE TO CHECK MY **SCHEDULE,** BUT YES, DEFINITELY! HOW ABOUT TONIGHT? IS TONIGHT TOO SOON?

WELL, NO. WE COULD...

CAPTAIN! THIS SCANNER SHOWS A VERITABLE ARMADA OF **SCIENCE-RIVALS** APPROACHING YOUR **UNIVERSARIUM!**

HOLY **SPACE!** IT'S EVERY BRITISH COSMIC CHARACTER I'VE EVER **HEARD** OF!

THERE'S JET **BLACK**, STEVE **SAMSON**, DANE **JERRUS**, REX **COSMO**...

WE'D BETTER **DEFEND** OURSELVES!

AS MEMBERS WITHOUT SPACE-POWERS BORROW EQUIPMENT FROM THE UNIVERSARIUM'S **ARSENAL**, THE COMRADES PREPARE TO REPEL **BOARDERS**...

LET'S SHOW THESE BOUNDERS WHAT **FOR!**

WHAT ROTTEN LUCK! I WAS HOPING TO SEE MORE OF YOUR **SPACE STATION!**

WELL, VULL THE INVISIBLE, MAYBE I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND AFTER THIS **CURRENT** ADVENTURE IS **CONCLUDED!**

AHOY, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE! LUCKILY, THE OORT CLOUD IS AN **ACTUAL** CLOUD, AND WILL TRANSMIT **SOUND WAVES!**

I ALREADY **KNOW** THAT, JET BLACK, SO-CALLED **ROCKET MAN!** WHY ARE YOU PEOPLE HERE?

WE'RE HERE ON GOVERNMENT **ORDERS** TO INSPECT YOUR **BASE!** JUDGING FROM ITS **SIZE**, WE MAY BE HERE FOR **WEEKS!**

I SHOULD COCOA! WE'RE ONLY ANSWERABLE TO THE **UNITED NATIONS**, AND I SUSPECT THIS IS SOME GOVERNMENT **RUSE!**

I'M AFRAID YOU ASKED FOR THIS, MY OLD SON!

COME ON, GANG! LET'S ZITZ THESE CHUMPS **UP!**

MERCIFUL **METEORITES!** THAT 30TH-CENTURY SPACE-VIXEN **SATIN ASTRO** HAS DISINTEGRATED **REG AND COMPANY** WITH HER GONE-GUN!

WHEREAS SOLO STAR THE HUMAN **ROCKET** HERE MERELY REQUIRES OLD-FASHIONED **FISTICUFFS,** WOT?

SMASH!

YURRGH! C-CAN'T **BREATHE...**

SO FAR, SO GOOD! MARSMAN'S USING MIND-CONTROL TO COLLIDE **REX COSMO** AND **CRASH CAREW,** WHILE CAROL'S SIZZLING THAT BLOWHARD **BLACK!** SHE'S QUITE A **GAL!**

BUT WE'RE STILL **OUTNUMBERED!** MAYBE I CAN EVEN THE **ODDS!**

USING THE POWER OF BILOCATION BESTOWED BY IMPORTANT SCIENCE-GHOST **PYTHAGORAS,** THE SUPER-MARVEL KING OF THE SPACEWAYS SPLITS INTO **TWO** CAPTAIN UNIVERSES!

AND IN CASE YOU HADN'T HEARD, EACH CAPTAIN POSSESSES **ALL** MY POWERS--INCLUDING **BILOCATION!** THEORETICALLY, I COULD FILL THE WHOLE **UNIVERSE** WITH **ME!**

OOF!

SUFFERING **SUNS!** ONE IS GIVING **SPACE ROVER PETE** A PASTING, WHILE THE OTHER ATOMIZES **THOR STEEL** AND **PETE MANGAN!** I MUST ACT!

AS GALACTIC GUARDIAN **STEVE SAMSON** DELIBERATES, VULL SEIZES THE BILOCATED CAPTAIN'S **ATTENTION...**

LISTEN, BOTH OF YOU! THIS ATTACK IS A **DIVERSION!**

WHAT?

WHAT?

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE RECOMBINES IN SURPRISE...

THE GOVERNMENT MUST BE PLOTTING SOMETHING BACK ON **EARTH!** WE'D BEST GET **BACK** THERE!

NOT SO **FAST,** SUPER-MISCREANTS!

I, STEVE SAMSON, APPOINTED BY **THE MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE,** HAVE WITHIN THIS PRISON-CUBE AN **UNBEATABLE** OPPONENT!

WHAT THE DICKENS--?

HEY, I-ISN'T THAT--?

BEHOLD **THE BLACK WIZARD** FROM THE MAGIC-RULED EARTH OF **6400 AD,** A FOE OF ANGLO-AMERICAN HERO **MASTERMAN** WHO WE'VE OFFERED A REDUCED **SENTENCE!**

SO THIS IS FABLED PRE-DISASTER SUPER-BUNCH THE **SEVEN STARS!** YOUR FATES ARE SEALED!

"BY THE BOWELS OF **BULGRAZOON** AND FETID FANGS OF **FNARR,** TO THE WASTES OF MORGRETH'S MOON TRANSPORT EACH STARTLED **STAR!"**

F-FRIENDS, MY **ECTO-SENSES** REVEAL WE'RE FADING INTO NETHER-WORLDS...

...OF THE ZODIAC!

AND AS OUR FLABBERGASTED FELLOWSHIP FADE FROM SIGHT...

WELL, WE'VE TAKEN SOME **CASUALTIES,** BUT NOW THOSE HYPER-MEDDLERS ARE OUT OF EVERYONE'S **HAIR!**

I'LL CALL LONDON ON MY **SPACE-PHONE** AND REPORT OUR SUPER-**SUCCESS!**

THE UNKNOWN

MEANWHILE, IN THE GOVERNMENT'S **SPY HEADQUARTERS...**

...USING 64TH-CENTURY ATOMIC **SORCERY,** YOU SAY?

YES, YES, THAT'S SPLENDID NEWS, MR. SAMPSON.

WELL? WHAT'S HAPPENING?

THAT WAS ADVENTURER STEVE **SAMSON** CALLING FROM BEYOND **PLUTO.**

THE SEVEN STARS HAVE BEEN BANISHED TO AN EXTRADIMENSIONAL **HADES!**

EXCELLENT! WE CAN **PROCEED!**

Y-YOU MEAN OUR PUBLICITY STUNT TO ESTABLISH THE **VICTORY VANGUARD?**

OF **COURSE!** WITH ALL THESE ADDITIONAL SUPERMEN AGAINST THE **'MASS,** WE CAN'T **FAIL!**

"OUR MIRACLE-DOLTS ARE ON ROUTINE EXERCISES IN CENTRAL LONDON, LITTLE SUSPECTING THAT THE **'MASS** IS CONTAINED BENEATH ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL AWAITING IMMINENT **RELEASE!**

"THE VICTORY VANGUARD WILL SWIFTLY DEFEAT IT, BECOMING NATIONAL TREASURES!"

B-BUT WHAT EXACTLY **IS** THIS "MASS," SIR?

DIDN'T I TELL YOU? IN 1953, DURING THE **O'BRIEN** PERIOD, BRITAIN WAS STILL CONDUCTING A COVERT **SPACE PROGRAM.**

ONE OF OUR ASTRONAUTS RETURNED INFECTED BY AN ALIEN **FUNGUS.**

"EVENTUALLY, UTTERLY TRANSFORMED, WE CORNERED THE POOR FELLOW IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND **ERADICATED** HIM...

"...ALTHOUGH OF COURSE WE RETAINED **CUTTINGS** FOR FUTURE STUDY."

WE NAMED OUR FAST-GROWING SPECIMEN AFTER THE SCIENTIST WHO'D **INVESTIGATED** IT. CONCEIVABLY IT RETAINS SOME HUMAN **INTELLIGENCE.**

A-AN INTELLIGENT PLANT? BUT THAT'S **LUDICROUS!**

"IS IT? WE SHALL SEE, GEORGE. WE SHALL **SEE!"**

CALL THIS **ADVENTURING?**

AW, VAL, C'MON...

WAIT! WHAT'S THAT UNEARTHLY **RUMBLING?** IT SOUNDS LIKE...

URRGLUH GLUHGLUH GLAAHH!

FlowerShow

15

TRAM

J-JINGO H. CRIKEY ON A **LAMBRETTA!** WHAT IN YUCCA FLATS IS **THAT?!**

P

A

B

G

BERRY RIPPLE

TO RE-LEARN THE HORRIFYING **ANSWER,** DON'T FAIL TO READ CHAPTER FOUR OF OUR NOVEL-LENGTH **SUPER-STORY!**

We look forward to receiving your electronic mail! Send it here: tothestars@knockabout.com

How do, TEMPEST-taught titans of tomorrow! It's your dysfunctional demiurges Al and Kev here, our identities slowly crumbling under the weight of this over-involved parodic posturing to the point where we don't know our nationality, what year it is, or who we are. Luckily there's always the mountainous pile of less than six letters from you, our loyal if confabulated readers, to keep our feet firmly planted on the office junior. Let's have a gander at your laughably juvenile concerns!

Dear Al and Kev: Yesterday, while out scrumping for bananas, I chanced upon two old men burning a mountain of white cardboard. On closer inspection the cardboard was covered in words and drawings of Captain Universe, Marsman, Satin Astro and other members of the Seven Stars in what would seem to be their earlier adventures…what goes on? I thought the Seven Stars were real, but the old men said they were made up and I was an imbecile! Please tell me the Seven Stars are real, or my world will be nothing but a tissue of lies. P.S. Did Satin Astro receive my proposal of marriage? If so and she turns me down I shall have talcumed my privy parts for nought!

Napoleon Very Solo, Smallhampton

Napoleon, our handsome, you can put your clearly troubled mind at ease and rest assured that every member of the Seven Stars is 100% real! However, if you have even the most superficial understanding of publishing lead-times, with these first three letters-pages compiled at least a month before the first issue is available, you will realise that you yourself are obviously made up. And an imbecile.

Dear Al and Kev: As a pupil at Alfred Einstein Remedial School for Boys, I take considerable interest in science-related projects which may prove the hypothesis that comics contain a unified theory of monkey see – monkey do. My end-of-captivity composition will be on reality and the Seven Stars, and is well under way. Taking first the vexed question of how does Vull's invisibility really work, I took one 1920s motorcycle helmet, one radio valve (large), and added ancient crystal radio set headphones. Stripping naked to meet the invisibility halfway but wearing my Vull helmet, I plunged my sweat-soaked fingers into a handy electrical socket. In a hail of sparks and urine I was blasted across Gamages' TV and Radio department and landed in Ladies Underwear, my head and private places smouldering. Dazed but certain my experiment was a success, I wandered around watching shoppers look in horror at something behind me – a policeman, as it turned out. Collecting me later from Social Services, Mum and Dad forbade continuation of my research (I agreed but had scorched fingers crossed behind my back). Dad, while angry, did have to concede I had almost made myself disappear. I feel this latest experiment can tick off from my list both Vull the Invisible and Electrogirl. Furthermore, landing in a life-saving display of brassieres and suspender-belts has offered insights into Satin Astro and her gifts. Next week I will scale the Town Hall roof and scream GALAP until I'm sick, or change into a flying muscleman with an appetite for foundation garments.

Cecil Invisible-Velvet Cosmo Jones, Frockwit, Sunderland

Steady on, there, Cecil! As responsible adults who may also in some way be legally liable for your behaviour, both Al and Kev feel they should point out that your attempts to test the super-powers and origins of our captivating characters will almost certainly end in your physical demise, although we suppose you would then be able to tick Zom of the Zodiac from your list, except, of course, you wouldn't.

Dear Al and Kev: As a general practitioner, I write to congratulate your excellent magazine on the fact that none of the members of the Seven Stars are pretending to be doctors, with their ominous names increasing public anxiety about the medical profession. For example, you wouldn't want to receive your scan results from someone named Doom or Fate, much less Octopus. "Occult" suggests, at best, a homeopath, while the only reasonable response to "Strange" is "In what way?" A career in medicine is already fraught with difficulties, without bizarrely-named costumed characters eroding public confidence and making us all sound like cackling lunatics. Again, thank you. Sincerely yours,

Dr. Keith Destruction, Hartlepool

Well, Doc, it's always nice to know that the Quack community appreciates our efforts. Although in fairness, we should point out that we also received an angry missive questioning Captain Universe's military background from a commissioned officer named Brian Astonishing, but, as with all critical letters, we decided not to print it.

Dear Al and Kev: Even though it contains no smutty references to Satin Astro and doesn't make your readership appear to be borderline psychotics who cannot differentiate between comics and reality, I wonder if you could answer my question: given that the Seven Stars story appears to be an issue-length six-part narrative, is it even remotely credible that there would be a letters page after every instalment? Also, since we've been previously informed that this is the only Seven Stars adventure, I'm wondering why us readers are apparently so familiar with the team. Just thought I'd ask.

Terry Ferry, Derry

Strike a light! Is it really roughly a thousand words already? Well, chums, it looks like that's all we've got room for this issue! Join us here next time for more clearly constructed conversation with your obfuscating overlords –

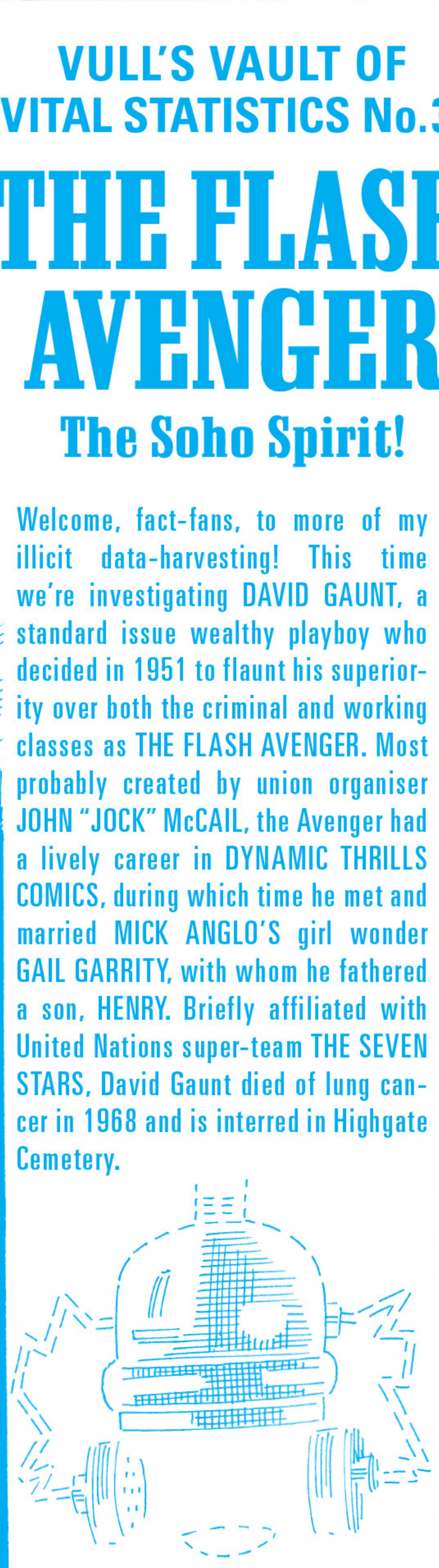
Al and Kev

VULL'S VAULT OF VITAL STATISTICS No.3:

THE FLASH AVENGER

The Soho Spirit!

Welcome, fact-fans, to more of my illicit data-harvesting! This time we're investigating DAVID GAUNT, a standard issue wealthy playboy who decided in 1951 to flaunt his superiority over both the criminal and working classes as THE FLASH AVENGER. Most probably created by union organiser JOHN "JOCK" McCAIL, the Avenger had a lively career in DYNAMIC THRILLS COMICS, during which time he met and married MICK ANGLO'S girl wonder GAIL GARRITY, with whom he fathered a son, HENRY. Briefly affiliated with United Nations super-team THE SEVEN STARS, David Gaunt died of lung cancer in 1968 and is interred in Highgate Cemetery.



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№ 4
DECEMBER 2018
EVERY EIGHT WEEKS

MINA the MINX

HO HO, READERS! I WONDER WHAT VAMPIRE-SURVIVING DIVORCEE JAPES I'LL BE GETTING UP TO **THIS** WEEK!

CHANNEL CAUSEWAY.

OO-ER! LOOKS LIKE I'M LEADING A GANG OF VICTORIAN LITERARY CHARACTERS AGAINST ARCH-FIENDS AND MARTIANS WHILE BEING MISTAKEN FOR STEAMPUNK!

ISH STREET SCHOOL

CRIKEY! NOW IT'S 1910, I'M IMMORTAL, AND SCRAPPING WITH **JENNY THE JINX** ON LONDON'S WATERFRONT!

SUPER SPIFLICATION!

PERHAPS AFTERWARDS, THINGS WILL CALM **DOWN!**

ULP! I SPOKE TOO SOON! IT'S 1958, I'M BLONDE AND BEING HUNTED BY SECRET AGENTS!

THIS JOB IS WEARING ME OUT!

oh oh

HOORAY! AFTER DRUGS AND BLACK MAGIC, I'M FINALLY GETTING A **REST!**

READER'S VOICE

=CHORTLE!= WHAT, FORTY YEARS IN A LOONY BIN?

AL

SHORTLY...

=GROAN!= LOOKS LIKE MY BREAK'S OVER, READERS! IT'S 2009 AND I'M BATTLING THE ANTICHRIST!

MAYBE I'LL ESCAPE TO THE **BLAZING WORLD!**

AND SO...

JUST MY LUCK! PROSPERO'S BUSY TIME-REVERSING A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION CAUSED BY THE BADDY FROM PANEL FOUR!

WHATEVER NEXT?

CONTINUES INSIDE...

A League LOOK-AND-LAMENT Feature: CHEATED CHAMPIONS OF YOUR CHILDHOOD

No. 4: KEN REID

Wotcher, mates, and welcome to the fourth foray of our tortuous **TEMPEST,** from your Big Apple/Bermondsey barrow-boys, Al and Kev. When we're not seeking therapy for our faux-American personality disorders we're eagerly excavating mishandled maestros of the medium to belatedly bewail, and what better subject for this Odhams Press-inspired issue than Britain's most majestic mad genius, the unforgettable Ken Reid?

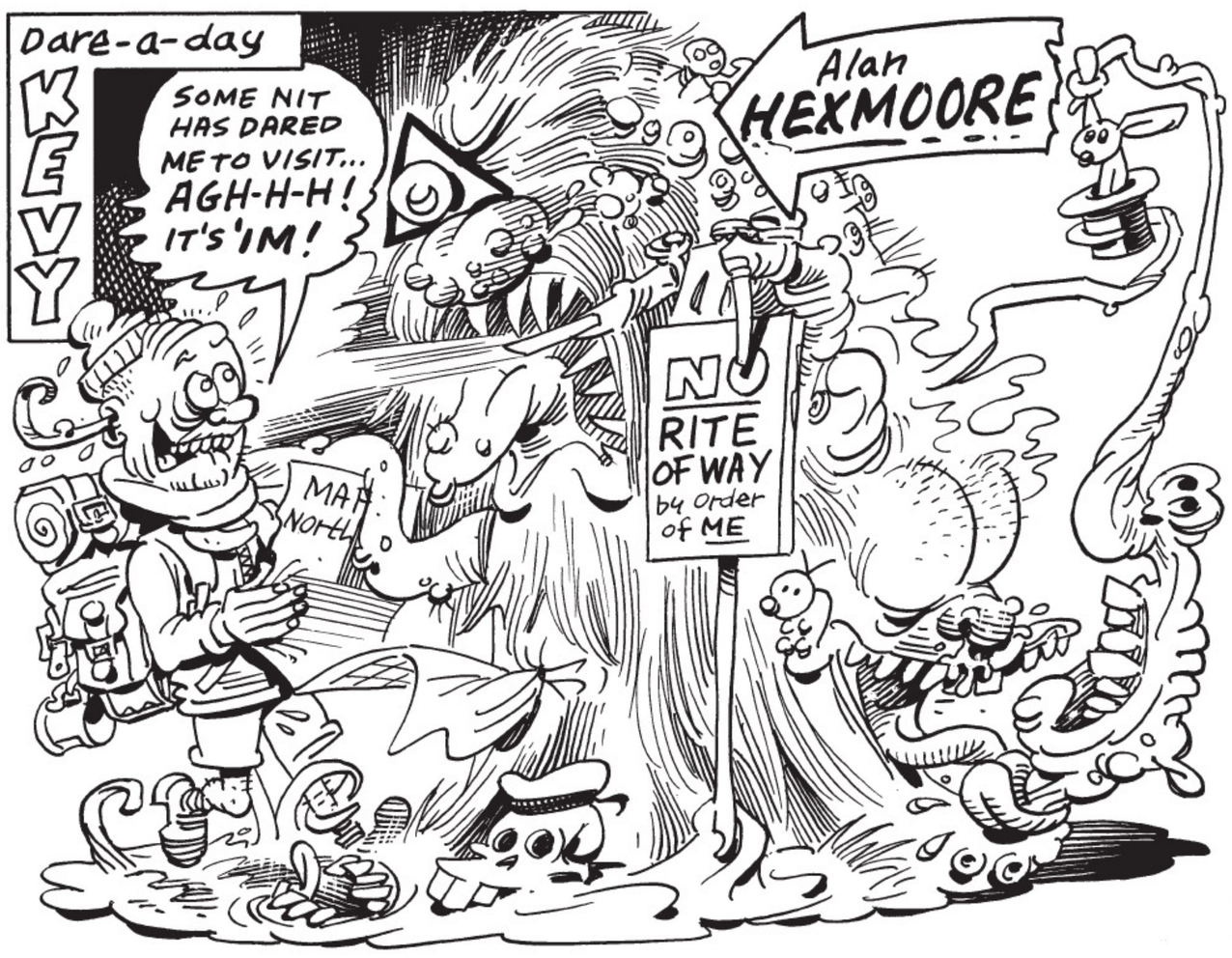
Born 1919 in Manchester, Ken's childhood confinement with a tubercular hip became an opportunity for him to practice drawing. Granted a scholarship to Salford Art School at age fourteen, he was expelled four years later for refusing to apologise over a truancy episode and set up his own wildly unsuccessful commercial art studio in 1936 while still a teenager. Helped by his forceful father, by 1938 he'd landed a three-panel comic strip in Manchester's *Evening News,* the enduringly beautiful and riotously imaginative 'Adventures of Fudge the Elf.'

This was suspended in 1941 until 1946, when Ken was demobilised into bombed and bereaved post-war Britain where the emerging deranged humour of radio's *The Goon Show* — perhaps a symptom of nationwide Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder — would infuse Reid's work with a distinctive gibbering mania. Working briefly for then-dominant Amalgamated Press, in 1953 he was snapped up by Amalgamated's up-and-coming rivals, Dundee publisher D.C. Thomson where, working alongside giants like Leo Baxendale, Paddy Brennan and Davy Law he created such memorable strips as 'Rodger the Dodger,' 'Angel Face' and Reid's personal favourite, the maritime menace 'Jonah.' In 1964, urged on by Leo Baxendale, Ken sought a better-paying berth with Thomson's new London-based competitor, Odhams Press.

By now an exquisitely polished cartoonist, for Odhams he crafted gems like 'Frankie Stein,' 'Jasper the Grasper,' and the magnificent 'Queen of the Seas.' In 'The Nervs' he recounted the exploits of an obese schoolboy's intestinal fauna, while his 'Dare-a-Day Davey' contained a bizarre unofficial crossover with Marvel's Nick Fury and an unpublished episode so demented it was only rescued from an Odhams bonfire by the late Steve Moore. This is perhaps where Ken's completely undeserved reputation for covert obscenity commenced amongst the squeamish and trepid editorial staff at Fleetway/IPC who absorbed Odhams in 1969. While he went on to produce many superb strips for IPC, including 'Faceache' in *Buster* and 'Creepy Creations' in *Shiver & Shake,* the Sixties had taken their toll: a difficult marriage and ECT treatment after a nervous breakdown were reflected in Reid's characters of the period, forever anxious, perspiring and swallowing 'nerve pills.' After an altercation with a mentally ill neighbour in 1987, Reid suffered a fatal stroke while halfway through a page of 'Faceache' at his home in Pendlebury. The page was finished by a house artist and published without a word of explanation. A unique comic visionary was gone, owning nothing save Fudge the Elf.

Flippin' Ada! Excuse us while we blow our noses and pull ourselves together. Join us here next time for another regretful rendezvous with your amiable if accusatory archdeacons —

Al and Kev



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KEVIN (The Artist) O'NEILL
BEN (The Colourist) DIMAGMALIW
TODD (The Letterer) KLEIN
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KING OF THE SPIES

FUNDERBALL

CLOT

WHAT A STICKY SITUATION! I'M BEING EMOTIONALLY BLACKMAILED INTO MURDERING MY **BOSS,** BUT I'M SCARED OF **CONFRONTATION...**

...SO I'VE POISONED HIS **TEA!**

M

TOP SECRET

NO ENTRY

?

ER...BOSS? I--I SEE YOU'VE FINISHED YOUR **CUPPA...**

EMPTY

WARRALSON'S WEIRDIES

HM? NO--TOO ENGROSSED IN THESE **FILES.**

MURRAY'S MANIACS

I GAVE IT TO THE **CAT.**

CURSES! I'D BETTER DISPOSE OF THIS **EVIDENCE!**

I NEED A NEW **PLAN!** SOMETHING UNTRACEABLE--LIKE A **DRONE!**

PAPER SHREDDER

SOON...

RIGHT, I'M GOING FOR LUNCH!

DRAT THESE UNFAMILIAR CONTROLS! I CAN'T LOCATE MY EXPLODING **DRONE!**

FU

WHIRRR!

DRONE!

BUT WHEREVER IT IS, I CAN STILL DIRECT IT STRAIGHT AT MY **TARGET!** HEH HEH!

BOOOM!

ERK!

FU

MUTTER! FUME!

THIS IS GOING BADLY! PERHAPS I SHOULD STAGE AN ELECTRICAL WIRING "ACCIDENT" INSTEAD!

SOON...

HO HO! I'VE REWIRED M'S OFFICE! HE'S IN FOR A BIT OF A **SHOCK!**

AH! AGENT **KING!**

I'M AFRAID WE'RE REQUISITIONING YOUR OFFICE TO DISCUSS THESE "SPECIAL TEAM" FILES!

K

B-BUT...

DON'T WORRY! YOU CAN USE **MY** OFFICE INSTEAD!

NOW, I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS **OXFORD** OPERATION...

M

ZAP!!

WE SHOULD PROBABLY CONCENTRATE MORE ON THESE **HISTORICAL** RECORDS...

FOR EXAMPLE, THERE'S THIS **FRENCH** GROUP, "LES HOMMES MYSTERIEUX"...

BAH! I'LL RESORT TO **PLAN B!**

PLAN B

BUT...

PLAN B

Shoot him in the face and plead insanity.

POOR OLD KINGY! MORE LAUGHS SOON!

LES HOMMES MYSTERIEUX

Our French fiends have lured England's champions to the Paris Opera, atop which Orlando confronts the deadly albino, Monsieur Zenith…

SO, MONSIEUR ORLANDO. THIS MARCH EVENING IS NOT TOO COLD FOR YOU, I TRUST?

OH, A TOUCH CHILLY, PERHAPS.

SHOULD YOUR SWORD BE ***HOWLING*** LIKE THAT?

THE BLACK SWORD SEEMS TO FIND ME, ***HOWEVER*** I AM INCARNATED. IT HOWLS WHEN IT IS ***HUNGRY.***

BESIDES, IT ***RECOGNISES*** YOU. IT HAS ENCOUNTERED YOU BEFORE, WHEN I WAS SOMEONE ELSE; WHEN YOU WERE ***ROLAND...***

…AND IT YEARNS TO TASTE THE SOUL OF AN ***IMMORTAL!***

AA!

ALLAN, THIS THING IS A BLOOMING ***NIGHTMARE!*** CAN'T YOU JUST ***POT*** THE BLEACHED BOUNDER FROM WHERE YOU ARE?

NOT FROM THIS ANGLE, AND NOT IN THIS ***DOWNPOUR.***

I'VE LOST A.J. AND MINA. YOU'RE ON YOUR ***OWN.***

US ALONE ABOVE THE WORLD, THEN. HOW ***APPROPRI-ATE.***

APPROPRIATE? I-IS THIS THAT ***PSYCHOLOGY*** TRICKERY I'VE HEARD ABOUT?

NOT AT ALL. WE ARE ***ALIKE,*** WE TWO. YOU WORK TOWARDS THE SUBJUGATION OF HUMANITY, AS DO I.

Y-YOU'RE INSANE. THAT ISN'T MY GOAL AT ***ALL.***

TRULY?

BUT UNLIKE THE DETECTIVE ***BLAKE*** AND HIS ILK, WE ARE ***SUPERHUMANS.*** OUR VERY ***EXISTENCE*** CORRODES THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

OH, COME. YOUR LONGEVITY, MY DRUG-ASSISTED ABILITIES-- THESE THINGS MAKE US ***EXCEPTIONAL.***

THUS HUMANS ENVY, WORSHIP AND ***ADORE*** US; LIVE THROUGH FANTASIES OF ***BEING*** US.

AND THAT IS ***ALL*** THEY DO.

THEY COME TO THINK ONLY IMPOSSIBLE BEINGS ARE CAPABLE OF GREATNESS. THEY CEASE ATTEMPTING IT FOR ***THEMSELVES.***

B-BUT THAT'S-- ***YURP!***

THEY ABDICATE RESPONSIBILITY TO US. AND ***ONE*** DAY, WHEN THEY ARE BECOME AS INCAPABLE AS CHILDREN...

...ONE DAY THEIR DREAMS SHALL RISE UP AND ***DEVOUR*** THEM.

BUT I HAVE DELAYED YOU LONG ENOUGH.

THE MONSTER ***FANTOMAS*** WILL SOON TRIGGER ITS EXPLOSIVE DEVICE. ***ADIEU,*** MONSIEUR.

OH GOD.

ALLAN? I--I THINK THERE'S A ***BOMB...***

AND, DEEP IN THE SUBTERRANEAN CATACOMBS BELOVED BY ***ERIK,*** *THE PARIS OPERA'S DISFIGURED "PHANTOM"...*

I WIN.

A BOMB? THEN THIS WAS ALL A ***TRAP?***

B-BUT MINA AND A.J. ARE STILL INSIDE THE ***BUILDING*** SOMEWHERE! HOW ARE ANY OF US GOING TO GET ***OUT*** IN TIME?

TO BE CONTINUED?

The TEMPEST

FOUR: IF FICTIONS FARE NOT TRUE--

...ALTHOUGH LAST YEAR'S PECULIAR **SKIES** WERE CAUSED BY AN **ANTICHRIST** BATTLING ORLANDO HERE.

WHAT?

SORRY...I WAS MILES AWAY, THINKING ABOUT OLD **ACQUAINTANCES.**

SO...YOU TWO WERE PART OF MINA'S SUPERHERO **SIDE-PROJECT** BACK IN THE 1960s, YEAH?

Y-YES, BUT...DID SHE JUST CALL YOU **ORLANDO?**

UM... YES. WHY?

NOTHING...IT'S JUST THAT "ORLANDO" IS THE 30th CENTURY'S MOST HUNTED **SPACE PIRATE,** ALTHOUGH HE'S **MALE.** PERHAPS A **DESCENDANT?**

NO...

EYES ONLY.

PROSPERO

NO, IT'S PROBABLY THE SAME ORLANDO. THIS ONE'S IMMORTAL AND FREQUENTLY CHANGES **GENDER.** SHE CERTAINLY **PUNCHES** LIKE A PIRATE.

WHAT OF **YOUR** GROUP?

WAIT...YOU MEAN I'M **STILL** IN TROUBLE AFTER A THOUSAND **YEARS?**

NO SURPRISES THERE, THEN.

MINA MURRAY--YOUR "VULL"--FOUNDED **THIS** GROUP IN 1898.

1964 The SEVEN STARS

Zom of the ZODIAC

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen

1898-1

AFTER DECADES OF ENMITY WITH MY FORMER EMPLOYER, M.I.5, WE'RE CURRENTLY IN LONDON TO ASSASSINATE ITS NEW **HEAD.**

THAT SHOULD BE HAPPENING **TOMOR-ROW.**

Edward Kidd

ONLY IF AGENT **KING** DOES HIS JOB.

I WAS ALSO HOPING TO MEET UP WITH **NORTON...**

WHAT ABOUT **OUR** ATTEMPT TO AVERT INTERPLANETARY **DISASTER?**

2009 LONDON

"MOST HUNTED." THAT'S REALLY **DEPRESSING.**

I RETURNED TO THIS ERA TO PREVENT THE CATASTROPHIC EVENTS COMMENCING WITH THOSE STRANGE **SKIES.**

WHERE CAN WE FIND **VULL,** YOUR "MINA MURRAY"?

I'M AFRAID MINA'S AWAY INVESTIGATING AN M.I.5 **NUCLEAR** ATTACK. SHE'S NOT CURRENTLY IN THIS COUNTRY...

...OR THIS **DIMENSION.**

LITTLE MINA IN BLAZINGLAND

BLUE ME DOWN! THE DUKE O' FLUKE BE DWINDLIN' DOOM!

SURE, I'M FINE WATCHIN' THIS A WHILE, NOW.

THEN THE CAPTAIN AND I SHALL SEE THE SIGHTS. YES.

AT YOUR SERVICE!

HUM! PROSPERO HAS MENDED THE ATOM-BOMBING.

THIS IS SWELL, I DON'T THINK!

IT'S FISHY FOR SURE. HE WAS READY FOR THAT BANG, YUP!

IT'S A BIG PUZZLE! AND WHAT ARE THESE FAIRIES DOING?

THAT IS A FIGHTER FORMATION, BY GOSH.

THERE'S A MILLION FAIRIES HERE, I'LL BET!

YES. AND MIGHTY PEPPED-UP ABOUT SOMETHING, WHEN YESTERDAY THEY GOT KILLED.

THEY ARE CELEBRATING, MAYBE! THESE HANDBILLS WILL TELL US, I GUESS.

OH! YOU ARE RIGHT. AT THE NEW GLOBE THEATRE THERE IS A PLAY.

IT IS BY SHAKESPEARE, TOO.

THIS MUST BE THAT THEATRE HERE!

GEE! WE'RE AT THE PREMIERE OF "FAERIE'S FORTUNES FOUNDED." THIS IS TOPS.

THIS DOES NOT LOOK LIKE THE OLD GLOBE THEATRE. NO SIR.

NO! THE SILLY FAIRIES ARE THINKING OF A DIFFERENT GLOBE, SURE.

HOW JOLLY. IT'S LIKE BEING BACK IN LONDON.

HUSH.

HUSH. THE CURTAIN'S RISING!

THE ADVENTURES OF JERRY CORNELIUS

HAGGERSTON PARK, HACKNEY, DAWN, FEBRUARY FIRST, 2010.

JERRY HOSTS AN INFORMAL GATHERING.

MORNING. ORLANDO, ISN'T IT? WEAPONISED GENDER FLUIDITY. YOU SHOULD MEET JERRY.

OH, WE'VE MET, 1969. SHE WAS MALE, I WAS YOUNG, GIFTED, AND BLACK.

WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?

HIM? HE'S THE VEGETATIVE BUDDHA. HERE FOR YEARS; IMMOBILE; ANCHORING LONDON.

NOW HE'S *VANISHING.* THE CITY'S SUFFERING FROM *ENTROPIC DRIFT.*

SO... YOU'RE SAYING LONDON'S IN *DANGER?*

NO. I'M SAYING LONDON'S *OVER.* NARRATIVE COLLAPSE. A SHARD IN THE HEART.

HEAT-DEATH BEFORE DISHONOUR, EH?

HMM. I SUPPOSE THINGS *DO* FEEL SORT OF *TERMINAL.*

HOW SO?

WELL, THE REJUVENATED BASTARD RUNNING M.I.5 IS NUKING EVERYWHERE ASSOCIATED WITH US.

WE'RE ASSASSINATING *HIM* THIS AFTERNOON, AND YOU'VE GIVEN US USEFUL ADVICE *BEFORE.*

USEFUL ADVICE? GET OUT, WHILE THERE'S STILL SOMETHING TO GET OUT OF.

TAFFY HERE'S UPPING STUMPS FOR A TASTIER WORLD.

LEAVING? BUT YOU'RE *NORTON,* PRISONER OF *LONDON.*

NO LONGER. THE CITY'S STAGING ITS OWN *DISAPPEARANCE.* I'VE OUTLIVED MY PRISON.

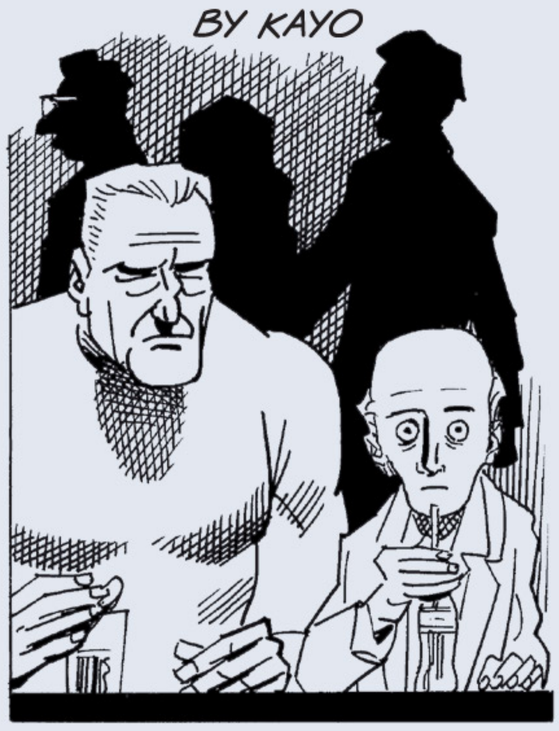
FRANKLY, THIS IS ALL BARONESS *BRUNNER'S* FAULT.

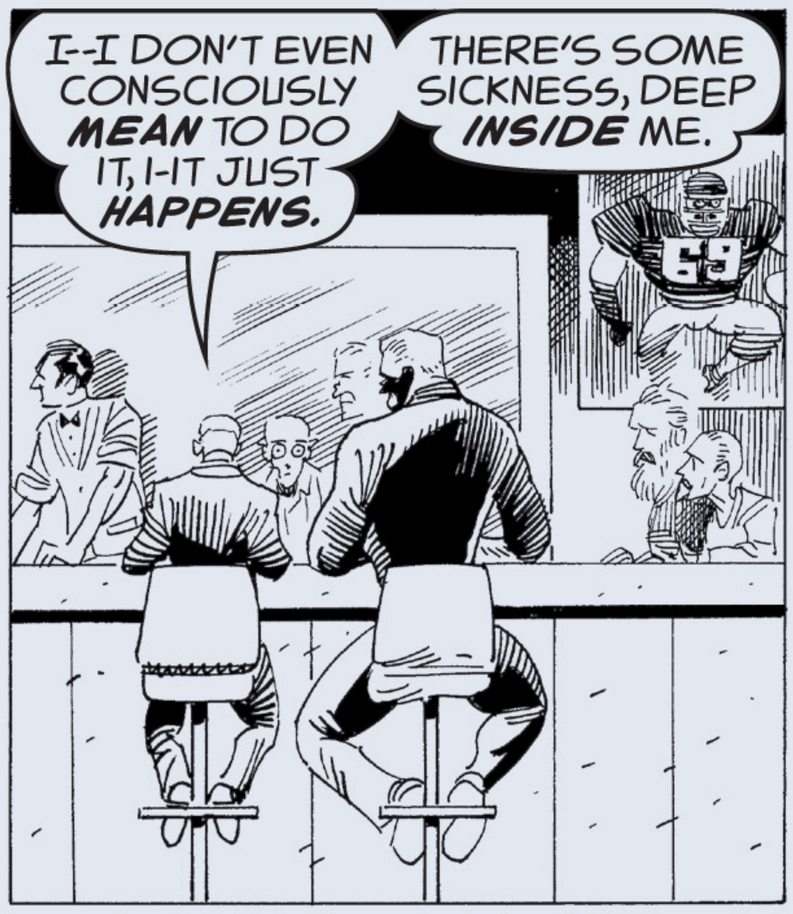
WHAT, *MARGARET* BRUNNER? THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER?

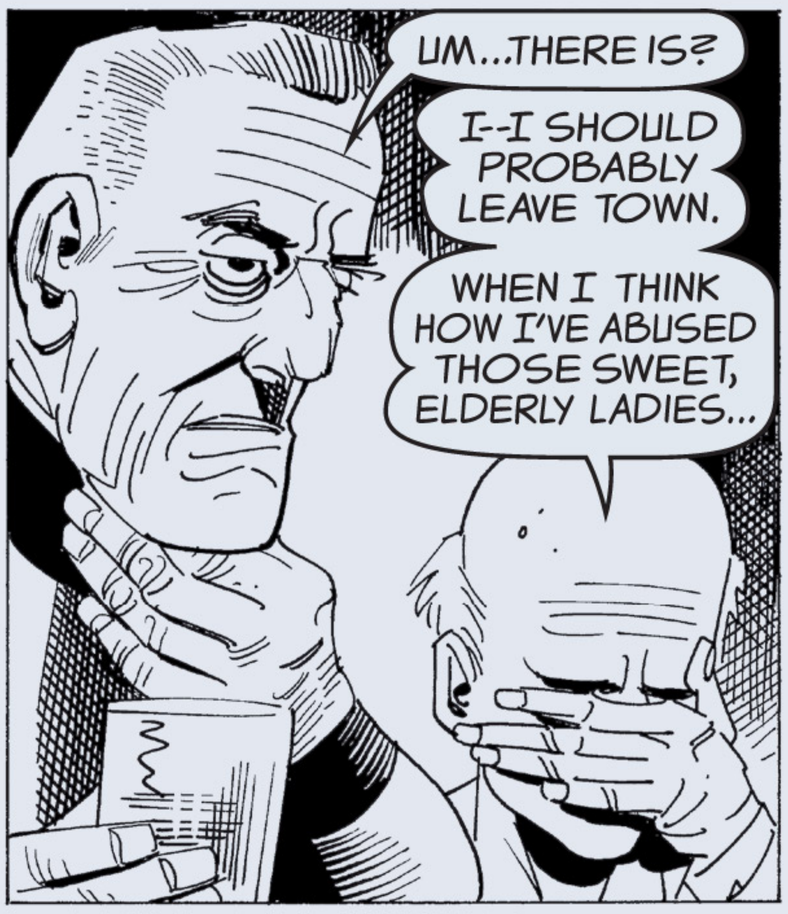
THE WIDOW. SHE SOLD THE WHOLE SHOW DOWNRIVER.
WHEN DOROTHY PERKINS BOUGHT DERRY AND TOM'S, YOU COULD SEE IT COMING.
SO WHERE WILL YOU TWO GO NOW?
HASTINGS: RESURRECT HAROLD; MAKE THE NORMAN INVASION BEST OUT OF THREE.
PERSONALLY, I'M HEADING FOR THE ***SANCTUARY,*** JUST OFF FLEET STREET.
"SANCTUARY"? IS THAT A ***CLUB?***
NO. PART OF THE BRIDE LANE VORTEX. DIDN'T IT USED TO BE ***TANELORN?***
IT'S A STOCKADE FOR MADE-UP PEOPLE. YOU'D DIG IT.
SORRY. OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.
OH, YES. YOUR ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT. GOOD LUCK WITH THAT.
HERE, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE MY ***NEEDLE GUN?*** SHAKEY MO COLLIER CAN GET ME ANOTHER.
IS IT RELIABLE?
ONLY THE BEST, FROM THE ENGLISH ASSASSIN. A DYING ART, WITH...
AH. HE'S GONE.
MM. TAKING THE GREAT ***WEN*** WITH HIM.
THAT'S IT, THEN? EVERYTHING'S FINISHED?
NO. JUST EVERYTHING YOU ***RECOGNISED.*** EXIT THROUGH THE GIFT SHOP.
WILL YOU BE ALL RIGHT?
APPARENTLY NOT. STILL, I'LL HAVE SEEN LONDON BEGIN AND END.
TAKE CARE.
ALWAYS, DARLIN'.
YOU TOO, EH?

OF MINDS AND MEN

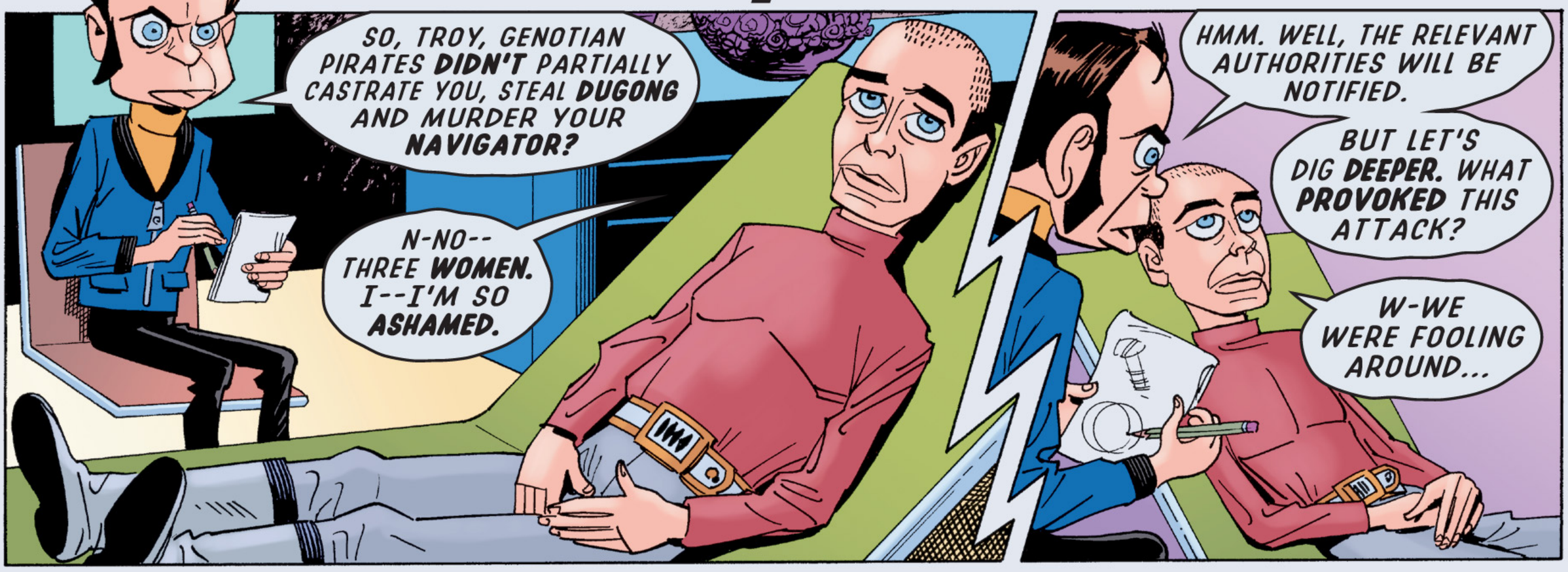
BY KAYO

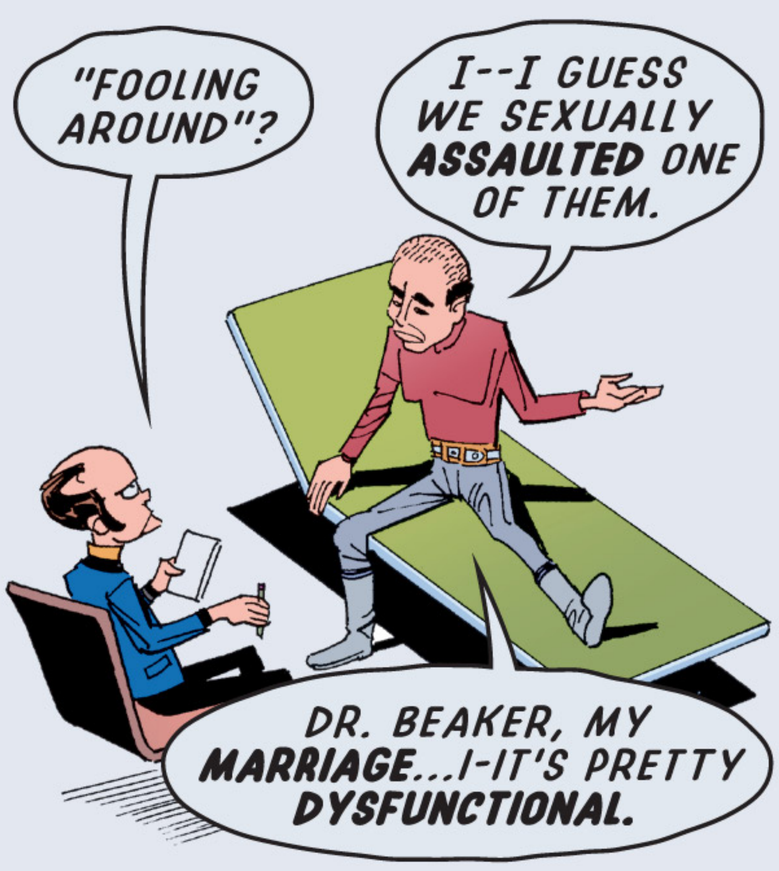


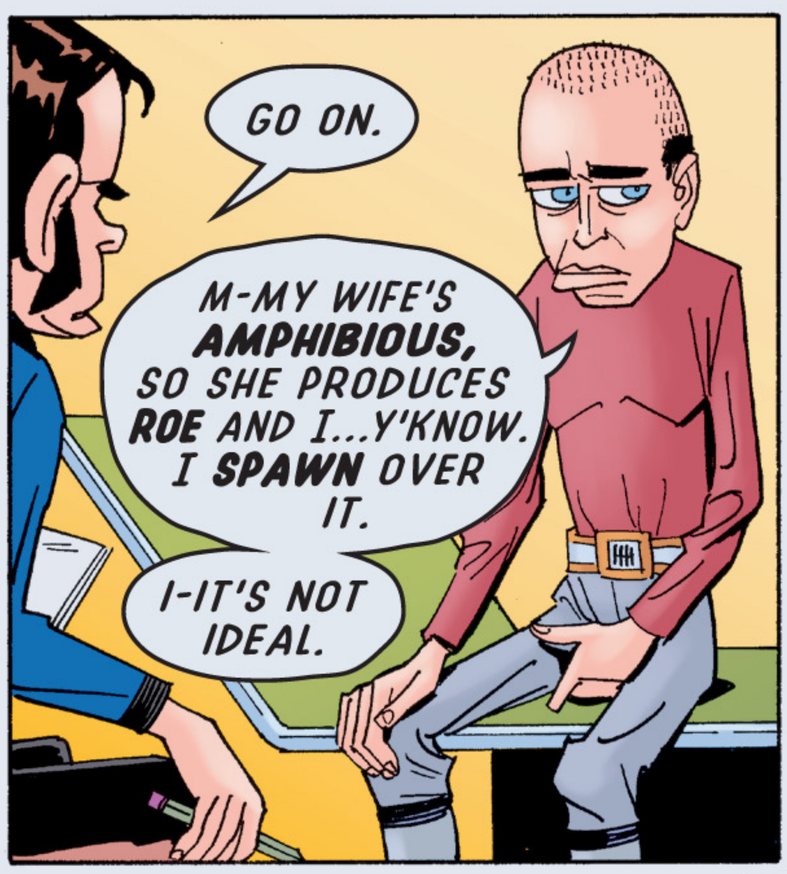


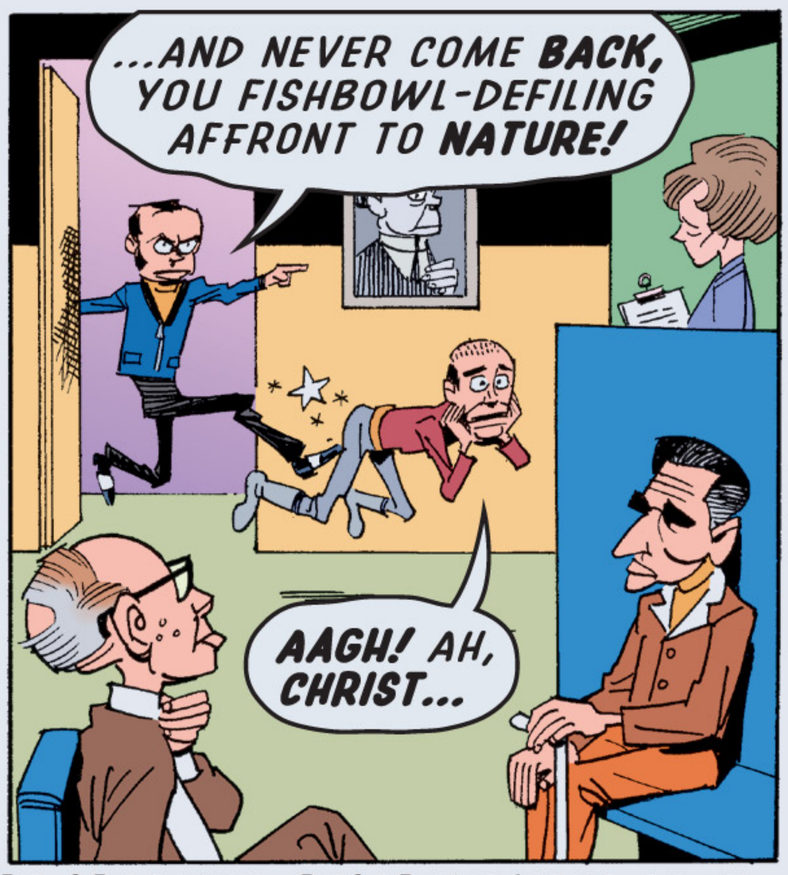


DUGONG - Special Victims Unit









MORE PROFOUND REPERCUSSIONS SOON...

While Jimmy schemes like old Macbeth, the girlies plot his lingering death!

The JAMESES and the DAMESES

ONE day, at The Dameses' SECRET CLUBHOUSE—

Huh! NORTON and CORNELIUS were RIGHT MISERIES! You'd THINK the WORLD was ENDING!

STAY OUT

DASTARDLY Plot

Cheer UP, LANDY! OUR fiendish murder scheme's WORKING BRILLIANTLY! =chuckle=

Is IT?

I'LL say! The PENNIES are with Greta, and SATTY and MARSY can keep GUARD here!

=SNICKER= LET'S don our "WORKMEN" clobber, drive to Vauxhall, and watch Kingy exterminate Jimmy!

File 13

TUFF CODES MI5 and over.

SOON, at the Jameses' Vauxhall den...

TOP Secret HQ

No Girls

Boys only

GRR! Where have our TROPHIES GONE? And where's my GIRLY SECRETARIES?

THE DAMESES' VAN

ERM...they're A.W.O.L., M, and removers took the SOUVENIRS!

Bah! I'll bet those pesky DAMESES are behind this!

ENTRY

M! Champion NEWS!

Edweird Hyde

CAVORWRONG

Looks like the Dameses have taken a W.A.S.P. SUB to the PACIFIC!

PACIFICK

HMM! Perhaps to this "LINCOLN ISLAND," eh, KINGY?

B.O.

Wh-whatever you SAY, BOSS!

That's the spirit! Now, how's our NEW image-recognition software?

J1

CRIVENS! ONCE something's ON CAMERA, we'll find it ANYWHERE, the NOO!

CORKING! Let's test it SOON!

EMMY, JERRY'S NEEDLE GUN is LUSH!

NO Nothing by order

=chuckle= CAREFUL it doesn't GO OFF, OR we'll be stitched up like KIPPERS!

GULP! MANY a TRUE WORD, EMMY! MORE executive action high-JINKS SHORTLY!

The NEW GLOBE THEATRE presents

Færie's Fortunes Founded

by William Shakespeare

Comedie Tragedie

Come, bring your squire. Step with us through these gates to venture on Her presence, half-divine, and scrye there vasty empires' secret fates.

Let our talks be unknown, Our words erase: in Nonsuch Palace, none such did take place.

THAT'S ORLANDO AND PROSPERO, TAKEN TO QUEEN GLORIANA BY SPY-CHIEF JACK ***WILTON*** AND BASILDON ***BOND.***

A ***YOUTHFUL*** PROSPERO. INTERESTING.

It seems like bosoms, or a brace of noughts; two O's within a seven bracketted.

Then two O's and a seven is your sign, and to this mark are all your payments writ.

SO...THAT WAS ***PROSPERO'S*** CODE-NUMBER ORIGINALLY? ***THAT'S*** AN ODD COINCIDENCE.

HMM. AS A STRATEGIST, I HAVE LEARNED TO ***MISTRUST*** COINCIDENCES.

The mariner, bedraggled and in debt, your spirits and yourselves, not to forget the courtesan, nor sweet deluded knight—

Nor pilgrim with his bundle knotted, furled, that shall precede you to a Blazing World.

Most lovely Queen, I am confounded quite...

NOW GLORIANA'S ASSEMBLING ***PROSPERO'S MEN...***

...FORE-RUNNERS OF MY ***OWN*** GROUP.

SHE WAS CERTAINLY ***PRESCIENT.*** DIDN'T THIS HAPPEN IN ***1558?***

...hardly knew themselves at all, and thus may willingly act Faerie's PLAN.

How would thy mother, lushly-fingered Anne, or thy great-uncle Oberon rejoice to know thy scheme—

Know that thy cunning choice gifts Faerie's wish since history began?

THAT'S UNSETTLING: WITH ORLANDO AND PROSPERO DISMISSED, THE FAIRIES ARE DISCUSSING ***PLANS.***

LONG-***TERM*** PLANS BY THE SOUND OF IT.

...a Blazing World, door to a different plane. There Prospero goes, nor shall his League remain, but in time follow to another state.

'Til when the years have in their hundreds passed, 'Til other men else women lead my band...

"ELSE ***WOMEN***"? J-JACK, SHE'S TALKING ABOUT ***ME.*** S-SOMETHING'S ***WRONG*** HERE.

I FEEL THE SAME WAY. LET'S REJOIN PROSPERO AND OUR COMPANIONS.

...and in this Blazing World shall take their stand, a bridge-head 'tween our worlds secured at last.

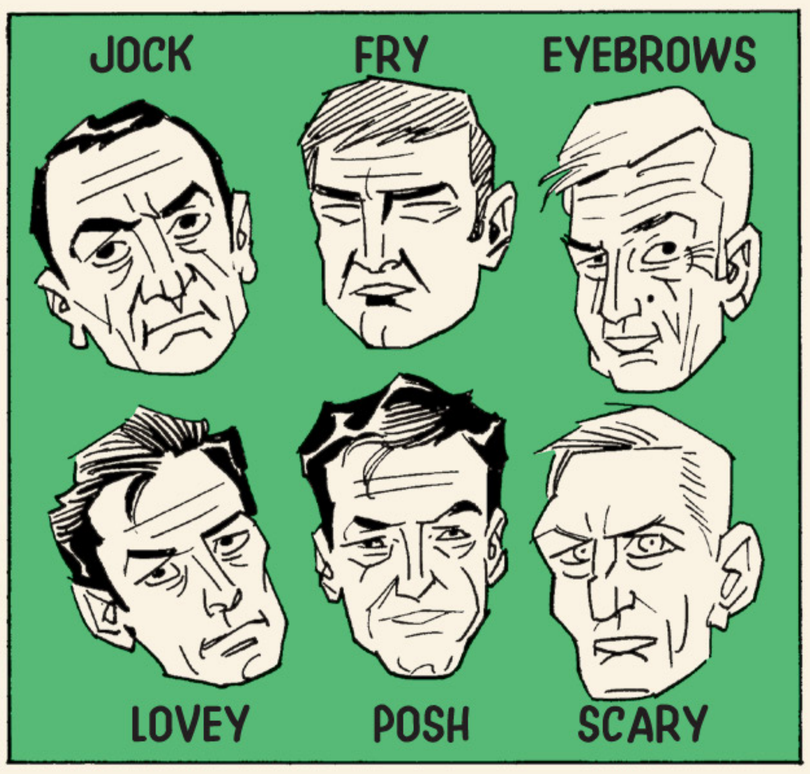
Now sleep, there are dark days to come e'er then, our bright kind scourged by new kings and their men...

...burn'd out from woodland, driven off from fen...

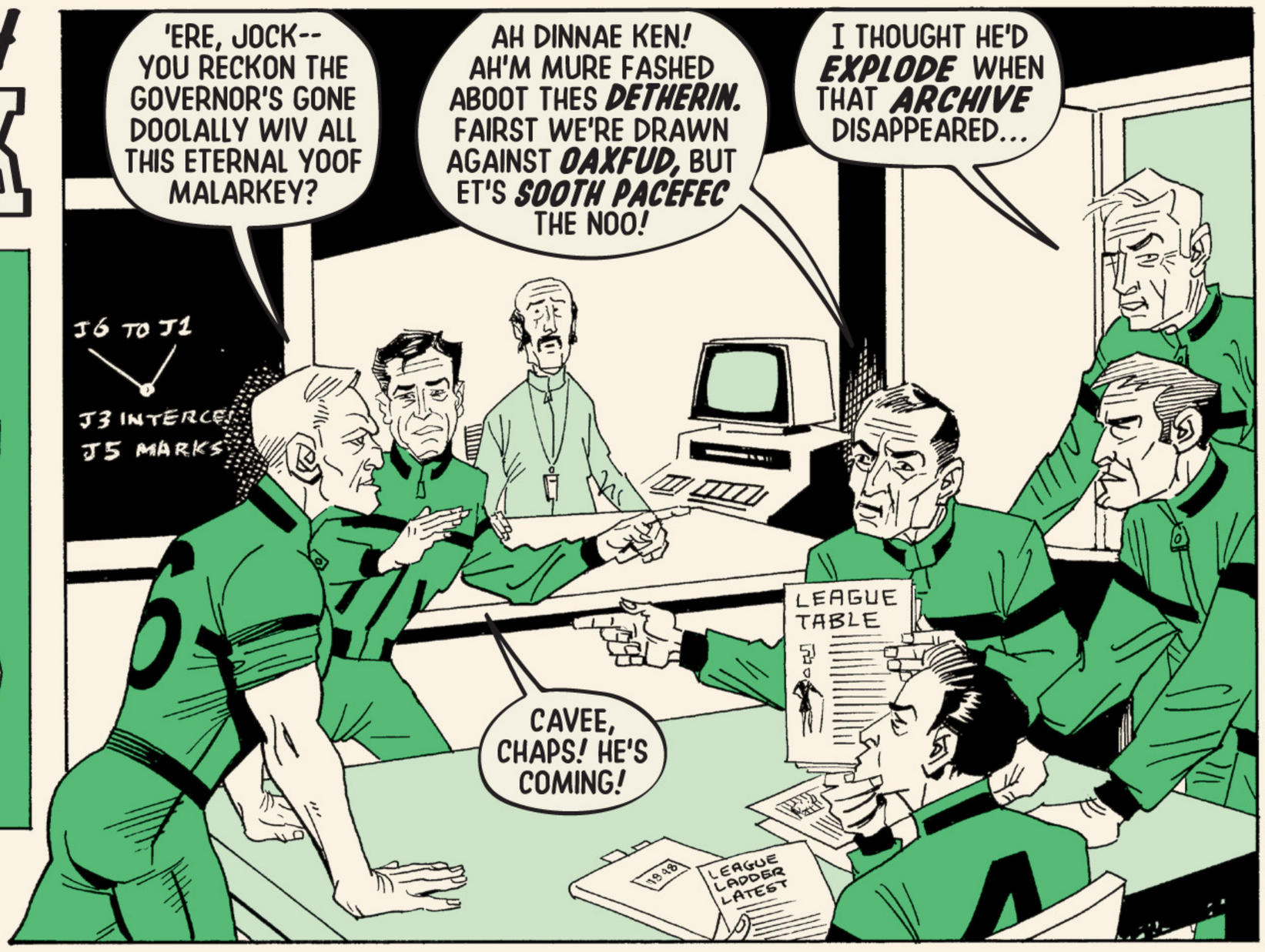
...and would I know dream's moonlit towns again.

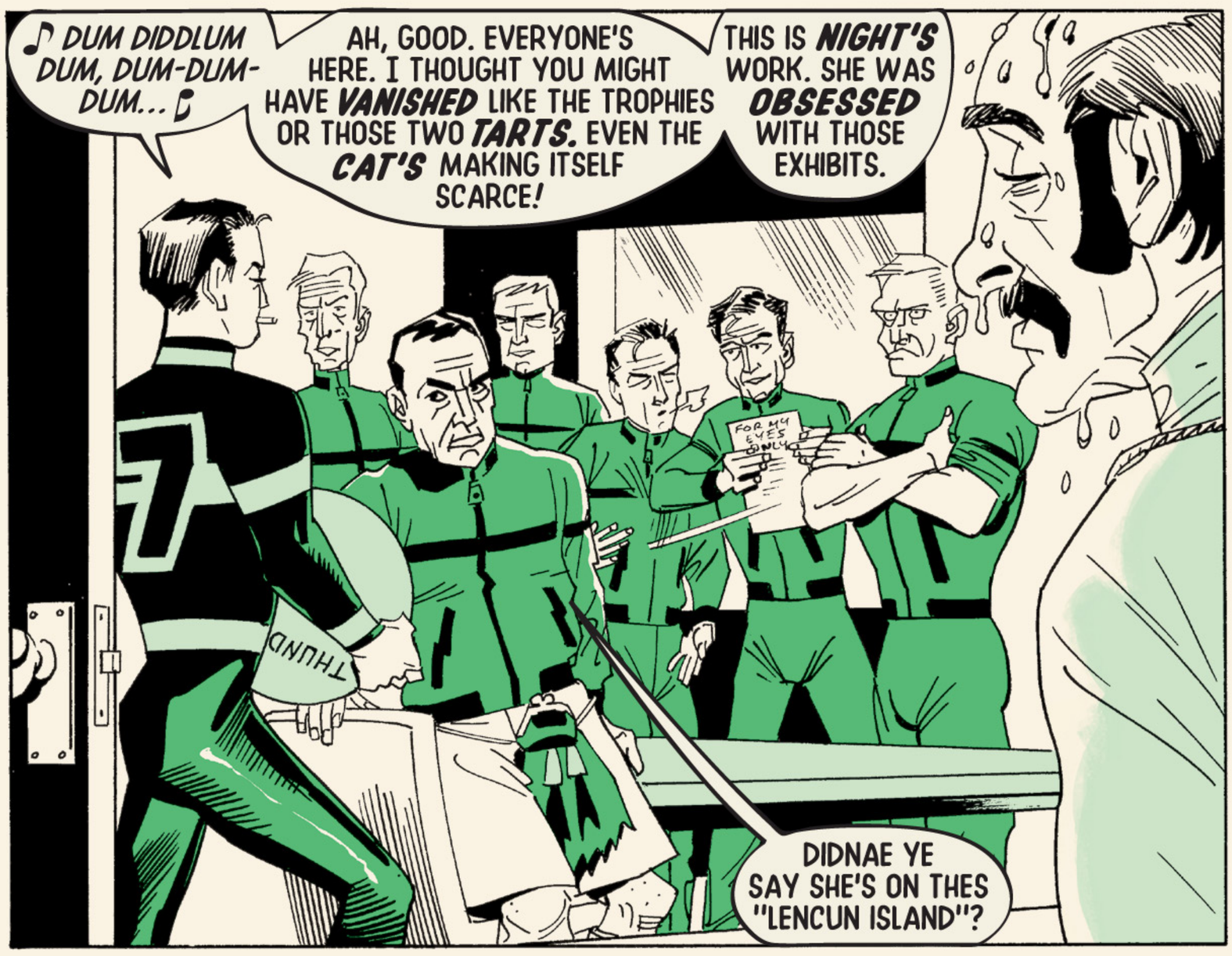
INTERMISSION

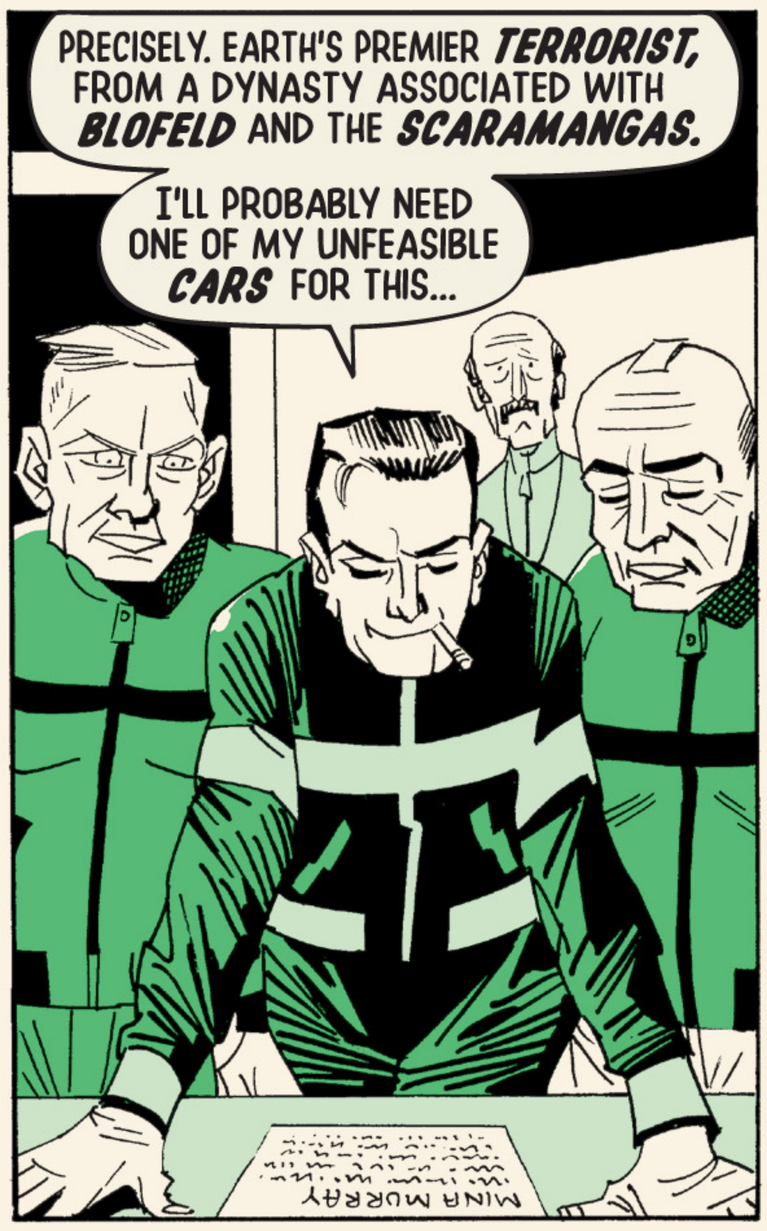
IN THE FIELD WITH J-FORCE SIX



*SUCCESSIVE SUBSTITUTES FOR AN AGEING STAR STRIKER (NOW REJUVENATED), THE TEAM ARE DISCUSSING **TACTICS...***







B-DAM! B-DAM!

...UK...

B-DAM!

RUDDY HECK! RUDDY HECK, THAT WAS CLOSE!

NIGHT AND KING'S SISTER WERE *SCHOOL FRIENDS.*

TO HAVE TURNED *KING,* NIGHT MUST BE IN *LONDON!*

GUV? I SPOTTED A VAN AHTSIDE EARLIER, AN' IT LOOKS LIKE ITS CREW ARE *SCARPERIN'!* ONE OF EM'S GOT *BINOCULARS!*

IT COULD BE *NIGHT!* FORGET J-1, HE'S A GONER! LET'S GET DOWN THERE *AFTER* HER!

VAUXHALL ROVERS

KK4976

BUT...

VIP! VIP! VIP!

KK4976

AAH! D-Dearhearts, they've sewn my sleeve to my *ARM!*

IS THAT A *NEEDLE GUN?* I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL RECALLED IN '71...

I-IT WOULD APPEAR NOT. I'M AFRAID THEY'RE GETTING *AWAY.*

LET THEM. THEY'VE BEEN UNDER THESE CAMERAS ALL AFTERNOON.

WITH J-1'S NEW *SOFTWARE,* WE'LL HAVE THEM WITHIN THE HOUR.

Home of the Six Lions

SHAME ABOUT J-1, INCIDENTALLY.

YEAH, WELL, JOCK'S BRAHN BREAD AN' LOVEY'S LOOKIN' A BIT IFFY.

THEY KNEW THE RISKS! THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT NIGHT'S BROKEN *COVER...*

6

7

...AND ALL WE NEED TO RELEGATE *HER* AND ANYONE *HELPING* HER IS ONE FINAL *AWAY GAME!*

MORE J-FORCE ~~SIX~~ FIVE FIXTURES SOON!

Nemo 3-D

JACK, SOMETHING'S ***WRONG.*** THE BLAZING WORLD'S BEEN VAPORISED AND PAINFULLY RESURRECTED. WHY IS IT ***CELEBRATING?***

INDEED. AND WHY WITH A DRAMA FORETELLING FAIRYLAND'S ***PURGING*** FROM 17th-CENTURY ENGLAND?

ALTHOUGH SINCE RELOCATING ***HERE,*** FAERIE'S EVIDENTLY ***THRIVING.***

Y-YOU'RE RIGHT. THIS VISIT, THERE'S PROBABLY MORE FAERIE THAN ***ANIMAL PEOPLE.***

AND THEY ALL SEEM SO ***PURPOSEFUL,*** AS IF THEY'RE PREPARING FOR SOMETHING TERRIBLY ***IMPORTANT.***

HMM. EVEN THEIR UNFATHOMABLE ***RITUALS*** FEEL LIKE A ***MILITARY DISPLAY.***

DO YOU THINK SO? THIS GROUP HERE SEEMS ***FAMILIAR*** FROM SOMEWHERE, PERHAPS A CHILDREN'S BOOK ILLUSTRATION, OR A PAINTING I'VE SEEN.

BUT THE ***ATMOSPHERE...*** IT ISN'T CHARMING, IT'S TERRIFYING, THOUGH HARD TO LOOK ***AWAY*** FROM.

AGREED. MY GRANDMOTHER'S LOGS MENTION FAERIE'S ***OBSESSIONAL*** QUALITIES AS A DANGEROUS COMPONENT OF ITS ***AURA.***

EVERYTHING'S SO INSIDIOUSLY ***FASCINATING.*** EVEN PLACID LAKESIDE VISTAS TEEM WITH FRENETIC MINIATURIST ***ACTIVITY...***

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN. IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE ***FISHING*** FOR SOMETHING.

JACK, THAT ***PLAY...*** COULD GLORIANA HAVE PLANNED ***ME,*** FOUR ***CENTURIES*** AGO?

CONCEIVABLY, BUT TO WHAT ***END?***

I DON'T KNOW. SOME ***CONTINGENCY*** PLAN, TO COUNTERACT FAERIE'S BANISHING, OR...

UGGH! ***THOSE*** AREN'T FAIRIES. I THINK THEY'RE ***LLOIGOR.***

ASSUREDLY... BUT WHY ARE THEY IN THE ***BLAZING WORLD?***

W-WE SAW THEM HERE IN 1958, WHEN ALLAN ***OFFENDED*** THEM. WE'D HAD SEVERAL UNPLEASANT ENCOUNTERS OVER THE YEARS...

THEN ARE THEY ***ALLIES*** OF PROSPERO, WHOSE PALACE WE APPROACH?

I HOPE NOT. THEY'RE MALIGNANT HYPER-SPACIAL HORRORS. IF THEY'RE ALIGNED WITH ***PROSPERO,*** AND HE'S ALIGNED WITH ***FAERIE...***

BUT WHAT CONCEIVABLE COMMON GOAL COULD ***UNITE*** SUCH DIVERSE FACTIONS?

YOU'RE RIGHT. THE IDEA'S RIDICULOUS. I'M JUST RATTLED BY THAT ***PLAY!***

HANG ON, ISN'T THIS PROSPERO'S ***WORKSHOP?***

APPARENTLY. BLAZING WORLD GEOGRAPHY SHIFTS ***AROUND*** SO.

GOD, THERE'S OLIVER HADDO'S ***HEAD!*** HE ENGINEERED THE ***ANTICHRIST*** I BATTLED...

MERCIFUL DURGA! IT'S STILL ***ALIVE!***

L-Leave me *alone.* H-Haven't you done *enough?*

TH-THAT'S ODD. WHEN LAST WE MET HE SAID ***I'D*** CAUSE A "STRANGE NEW AEON," NOT ***HIM.***

HE SAID I PLAYED A ***SUBTLE GAME.***

NO DOUBT HE HOPED TO UNSETTLE YOU... ALTHOUGH ISN'T ***SUBTLE*** ONE OF PROSPERO'S ***ALIASES?***

NO MATTER. HERE ARE OUR FRIENDS, WHERE WE LEFT THEM.

THANK GOODNESS. I WAS WORRIED I'D ***DREAMED*** EVERYBODY.

MR. ISHMAEL, WHAT'S OUR SITUATION?

EVERYTHING SEEMS SHIPSHAPE, CAPTAIN...BUT I DON'T ***LIKE*** IT.

I BE LIKEWHYS SUSPECTACLED O' HEARSE-PLAY.

IS THIS FIREBALL-FIGHT ***FIXED?***

I'D WONDERED MESELF. AS FOR PROSPERO, LOOK AT WHAT'S COMIN' UP ***NEXT...***

OH, FUCK.

THE RETURN OF ELECTRO GIRL

WHAT THE DEVIL...?

IT'S THE ***ELECTROWAGON,*** WITH ANOTHER TEAM-MEMBER. GARATH SENSED HER ***APPROACHING...***

JESUS CHRIST! SATIN, THE ASSASSINATION ***FAILED!*** M.I.5 MIGHT ALREADY BE ***TRACKING*** US!

OH, YES. YES, THAT'S MORE LIKE IT.

THE CAMERAS PICKED UP VEHICLE REGISTRATION KK4976 LEAVING VAUXHALL.

NEXT THEY HEADED ***EAST,*** BACK TOWARDS THE ***CITY...***

ORLANDO, WE'RE IN ***TROUBLE.*** ALL THESE POLICE AND BYSTANDERS...

I'M NOT SURE I CAN MIND-BLOCK THIS MANY PEOPLE.

TRY. I'M GOING TO TALK TO ***CAROL.***

A BUS HAS BROKEN DOWN. "NOT AGAIN." "BLOODY TYPICAL."

HELLO? LOOK, IS ***ELECTROGIRL*** ABOARD?

NOT AGAIN.

BLOODY TYPICAL.

YOU'RE MISS ***ASTRO?*** I'LL OPEN MISS FLANE'S ***COM-PARTMENT...***

EVERYTHING'S NORMAL. SOMEONE'S FILMING A MUSIC VIDEO. "NOT AGAIN." "BLOODY TYPICAL."

NOT AGAIN.

BLOODY TYPICAL.

NOTHING IS WRONG. THE QUEEN HAS COME TO OPEN A NEW SUPERMARKET. "NOT AGAIN." "BLOODY TYPICAL."

NOT AGAIN.

BLOODY TYPICAL.

NO NEED FOR CONCERN. YOU'VE GONE TEMPORARILY BLIND AND CAN'T SEE ANYTHING. "NOT AGAIN." "BLOODY TYPICAL."

NOT AGAIN.

BLOODY TYPICAL.

CAROL, THIS... THIS ISN'T GOOD RIGHT NOW.

WELL, YOU CALLED ON ***ME*** UNANNOUNCED.

HANG ON, THIS HELMET IS KILLING ME...

SATIN, WHOEVER THIS IS, WE DON'T HAVE ***TIME!***

LOOK, YOU'RE COMPROMISING OUR SECRET ***BASE...***

YOURS? OUR TEAM WAS HERE FIRST!

SO...A-ARE YOU THE DRIVER OF THIS BUS, MADAM?

I--I THINK SHE'S HANNAH ***MONTANA...***

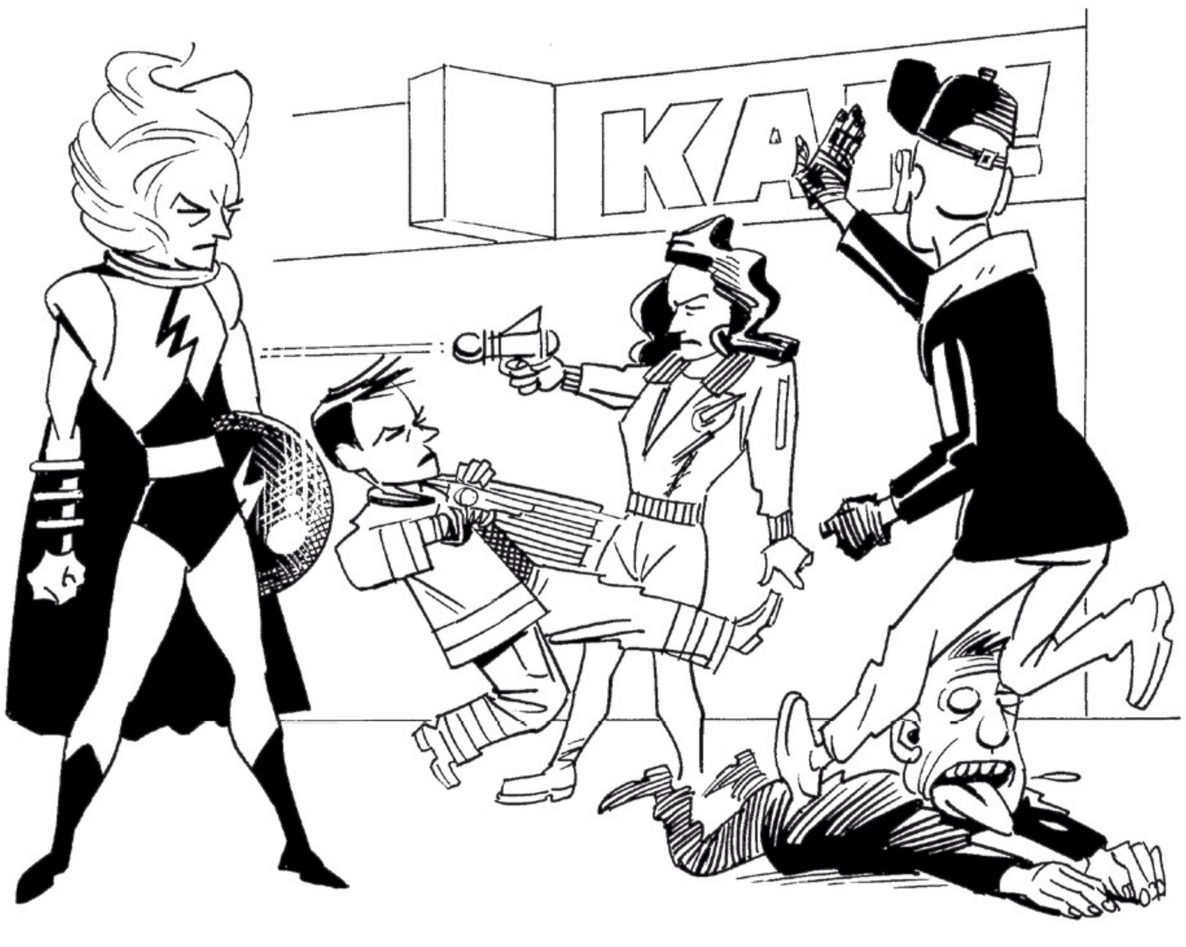
What?

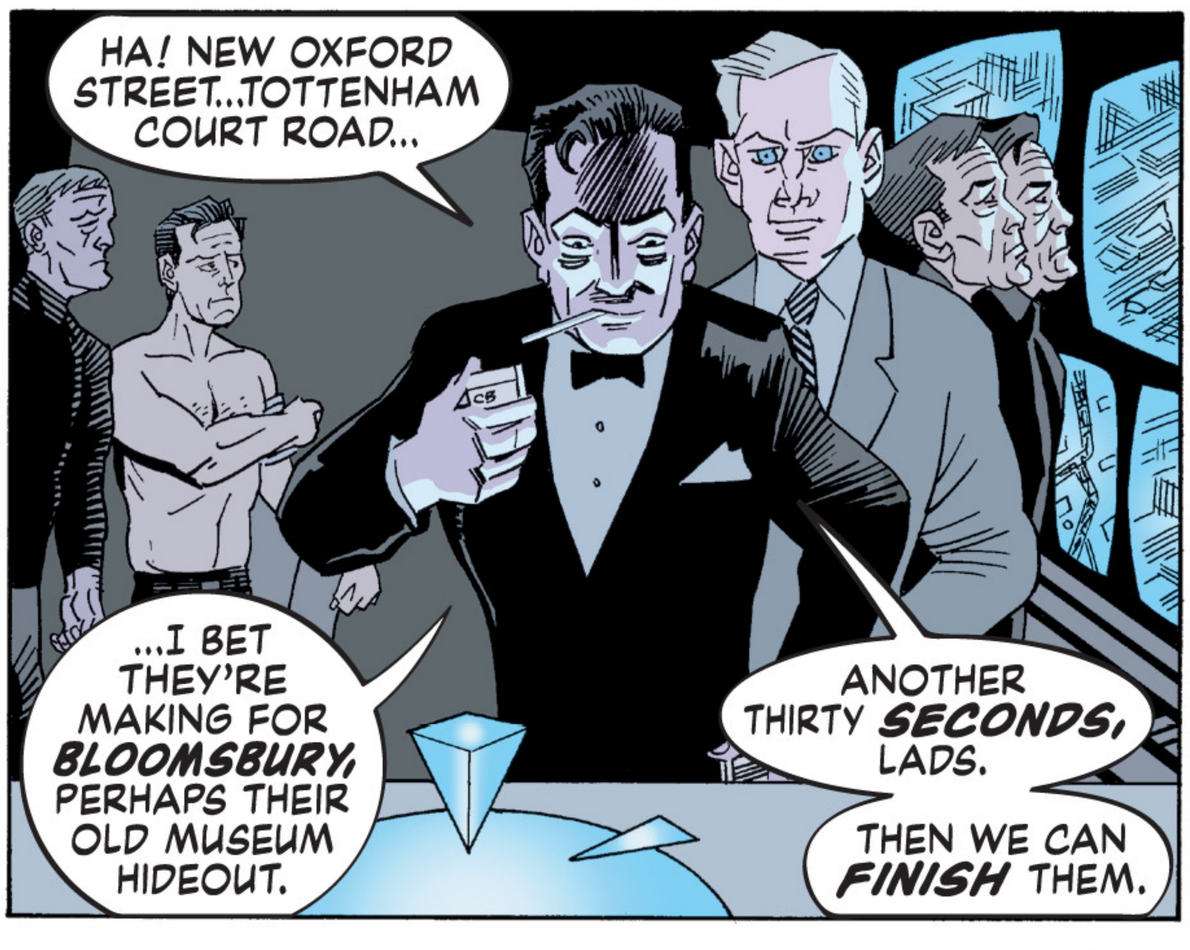
OKAY, APPARENTLY THEY WERE ON THE CITY ROAD, HEADED FOR THE WEST END.

IF THEY'RE MAKING FOR HOME, WE'VE GOT THEM FOR SURE.

SURE AS ***SHOOTING.***

THE WOMAN WHO FINALLY BLEW A FUSE





BATEMAN HOUSE

METAL

WHAT IN BLAZES...?

The Perils of PROSPERO

'TIS DONE, WITH THE UNWANTED PRIZE RETURNED.

NOW MAY I TO MY ***VISITORS*** ATTEND.

Y-YOUR EMINENCE, WE CAME WHEN WE HEARD WHAT HAD ***HAPPENED.*** LUCKILY, IT SEEMS YOU WERE ***PREPARED...***

FROM LATIN, FAUSTUS IS A ***LUCKY*** MAN, FOR SO MUST HIS SUCCESS TO MORTALS SEEM. YET SORCERERS, GLIMPSING FUTURITY, PERCEIVE NOT LUCK BUT RATHER ***STRATEGY.***

FIVE ***CENTURIES*** THIS JUBILEE CONTRIVED. UNWITTING, YOU'VE SERVED ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT, WITH FAERIE'S MACHINATIONS NOW COMPLETE. BUT SEE--HERE BIDES THE ***AUTHOR*** OF OUR SCHEME!

I-IT'S THE QUEEN FROM THE ***DRAMA.*** DID GLORIANA PLAY ***HERSELF?***

S-SO MY ***LEAGUE,*** ITS VARIOUS ***INCARNATIONS...***

...WERE ALL FOR FAERIE'S RETRIBUTION? AYE: 'TWAS PLAIN ORLANDO WOULD THE POOL BETRAY, PRECIPITATING THOSE OUTRAGES SINCE. BUT CEASE--I'D MY TRIUMPHANT ***MONARCH*** GREET.

SWEET CONJUROR, MY FANCY WAXES REAL. TREACHEROUS ENGLAND, DRIVING US FROM SIGHT, SHALL CONSEQUENCES SUFFER FOR HER SLIGHT, WITH ALL THE PLANET UNDER FAERIE'S HEEL.

CAPTAIN, THIS IS GOING BAD. WE SHOULD WITHDRAW...

WAIT! Y-YOU MEAN YOU ***ENGINEERED*** THAT NUCLEAR ATTACK?

BUT CERTAINLY. SIR JAMES' FOREFATHERS BORE MY NUMBER AND, OBLIVIOUS, WORKED MY WILL. HE DRENCHED MY REALM IN THERMONUCLEAR FIRES. RETALIATION, SURELY, NONE COULD BLAME?

FAIR GLORIANA, LET ME NEXT DISPLAY AN EARTH TRANS-FORMED ACCORDING TO THY WHIM, WITH FAIRYLAND ASCENDANT WHILE MANKIND TAKES ***ITS*** TURN COWERING 'NEATH HEDGEROWS DREAR.

MINA, MR. ISHMAEL'S ***RIGHT.*** WE HAVE TO GET ***OUT.***

BUT...WHAT RETALIATION IS HE ***TALKING*** ABOUT?

CIVILISATION'S END SHALL FIT ITS CRIME. THE FANTASIES IT BANISHED AND REPRESSED RETURNED; DREAMS COME, THEIR DREAMERS TO DEVOUR; NIGHTMARES FORGOT IN LOST TERRESTRIAL YOUTH.

THE UNFORGIVING FICTIONS ARE UNLEASHED, FIGMENT AND FABLE DIRE, FROM EVERY LAND. REALITY'S FRAIL SHACKLES FALL TO DUST AS DEVASTATING LEGEND SLIPS ITS CHAIN.

NO MERE THEATRE, A ***NEW GLOBE*** SEES BIRTH, AND WONDROUS THINGS SHALL TREAD ONCE MORE THE EARTH!

OH, CRIKEY!
A MAGICIAN PULLED A TRICK!
HE'S ACTUALLY THE VILLAIN!
WE'RE AGHAST!
SAVE UP YOUR POCKET-MONEY
DOUBLE QUICK,
AND ORDER THE
NEXT ***TEMPEST***
WHILE STOCKS LAST!

SEVEN STARS

AMBUSHED BY A FUTURE WIZARD AND MAGICKED INTO A BONKERS NETHER-DIMENSION, OUR STELLAR SEPTET ARE SENTENCED TO SUFFER AS...

CAPTIVES of the CREEPYVERSE!

ZOM, WE'RE TUMBLING **HELPLESSLY!** CAN'T YOU CONJURE US SOME **TRANSPORT?**

SADLY NOT. ZOM CAN ONLY TRANSFORM **HUMANS...** AND THERE IS NOTHING HUMAN HERE!

SPEAK FOR **YOURSELF,** OLD BEAN! UNLIKE YOU SUPER-SORTS, I'M A 100% **HOMO SAPIENS,** EH, WOT?

FLASH AVENGER, ZOM IS **HUMBLED** BY YOUR SACRIFICE!

ERM...LOOK, STEADY **ON!** I WASN'T ACTUALLY VOLUNTEERING FOR...

YOUR FLIPPANCY MASKS GREAT **NOBILITY,** PLUS FAITH IN MY INCREDIBLE POWERS...

...OF THE **ZODIAC!**

AND SO, WITH DAVID (THE FLASH AVENGER) GAUNT CHANGED INTO AN INTER-DIMENSIONAL ZEPPELIN BY ZOM'S INEXPLICABLE ABILITIES...

GOOD WORK, ZOM! NOW WE CAN TAKE STOCK OF OUR SITUATION!

THE KNOWLEDGE OF PHILOSOPHY BESTOWED ON ME BY **ARISTOTLE** TELLS ME WE'RE IN AN **OCCULT** REALM. IS THAT RIGHT?

YOU SPEAK TRULY, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE. FAR ABOVE THE MORTAL PLANE, WE ARE NOW ON THE **SPIRIT LEVEL,** WHERE EVERYTHING IS MONSTROUSLY **WEIRD.**

THAT MAGICIAN BANISHED US HERE TO STOP US SPOILING M.I.5'S **LONDON** SCHEMES! WE MUST **ESCAPE!**

VULL IS CORRECT...BUT WHICH WAY IS **OUT?**

WELL SAID, GARATH (MARSMAN) GANZZ. WE MUST CROSS **ECTO-SPACE** TO THE NECRO-PLANET **POSTHUMIA,** SEEKING **DIRECTIONS!**

GREAT! LET'S STEER THE FLASH AVENGER THERE!

THE FLASH AVENGER CHUGS THROUGH THE MENTALLY ILL FIRMAMENT, PASSING MANY IMPROBABLE SIGHTS...

WHAT ARE THOSE **CREATURES** DOING?

NOTHING. THEY'RE CALLED THE **"POINTLESS ONES."**

TH-THERE ARE SO MANY BIZARRE ENTITIES...

INDEED, VULL THE INVISIBLE! HERE, WE ENCROACH UPON THE **BEYOND,** THE **UNKNOWN,** THE GREAT **MYSTERY,** AND **SPOOKSVILLE!**

HMM...I'M STARTING TO SUSPECT YOU'RE NOT CONVENTIONALLY RELIGIOUS!

ALSO, YOU'RE VERY **KNOWLEDGEABLE.** IS THIS DOMAIN YOUR **HOME?**

ZOM, WHAT THE ZITZ **ARE** YOU?

PROMPTED BY CAROL (ELECTROGIRL) FLANE AND SATIN (SATIN ASTRO) ASTRO'S CURIOSITY, THE UNFATHOMABLE PANTOMIME CADAVER REMINISCES...

ZOM ONCE **LIVED**...LIKE YOU, ONLY **MALE!**

"MY MORTAL NAME WAS **EUSEBIUS ZOM,** A COMPILER OF HOROSCOPES."

:CHUCKLE!: PEOPLE ARE **FOOLS,** RELYING ON THE SUPPOSEDLY PREDICTIVE POWER... OF THE **ZODIAC!**

ZODIAC

ZOM

"A CYNICAL UNBELIEVER, MY PROPHECIES WERE ABSURDLY **SPECIFIC...**"

LISTEN--"TAURUS: TODAY YOU WILL BE MURDERED AND RESURRECTED AS AN AVENGING PHANTOM."

HOROSCOPE 1948 TAURUS

BUT AREN'T **YOU** TAURUS?

EDITOR

"SURE ENOUGH, NEXT DAY MY CYNICISM WAS PROVEN **BASELESS.**"

HMM! WELL, THIS IS UNEXPECTED! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE RESPECTFUL... OF THE **ZODIAC!**

HOROS

WOZ

"MY SOUL STOOD BEFORE A TRIBUNAL OF ASTROLOGICAL DIVINITIES"

YOU MEAN YOU DON'T **WANT** THE COMBINED POWER OF BULLS, LIONS, RAMS, GOATS, CRABS, SCORPIONS, FISHES, WATER-BEARERS, ARCHERS, TWINS, VIRGINS AND WEIGHING SCALES?

N-NOT REALLY.

"I FINALLY ACCEPTED THE POWER TO TRANSFORM HUMANS **CONSTRUCTIVELY,** THAT THEY MIGHT SOLVE THEIR **OWN** PROBLEMS, WHEREUPON CAPRICORN CALLED ME A MASSIVE HOMO."

NO BALL GAMES by Order.

THANKS, ZOM! AGEING ME THIRTY YEARS WILL TEACH THESE BULLIES A **LESSON!**

"I SOON LEARNED THAT MAGIC CAME AT A COST, THIS COST BEING **ARTHRITIS.**"

RECEPTION

WAITING ROOM

YOU TOO?

VERILY. IT'S AN INFERNAL NUISANCE...OF THE **ZODIAC!**

Wizard's Wives

PRAYBOOK

RITE CAR

"MY CAREER--ONE 1948 ISSUE OF **BIG WIN** COMICS--IS **LEGENDARY!**

"AS ZOM, I'VE TRANSFORMED NOT ONLY **HUMANS** BUT THEIR **LIVES,** OFTEN NON-FATALLY."

SUDDENLY, THE TENUOUS MONOLOGUE OF THE ODDLY-GARBED CORPSE IS INTERRUPTED...

PUZZLES VEGA HIKED

B-BY THE DOUBTFUL DUNES OF **DEIMOS!** THE FLASH AVENGER'S GOGGLES REVEAL **TROUBLE!**

TREMBLE, INSIGNIFICANT MORTALS, FOR YOU TRESPASS UPON MY DOMAIN!

I AM INFINITY, THE BIGGEST NUMBER THERE IS! MERELY TO CONTEMPLATE ME HAS DRIVEN MEN MAD!

THEY CRY, "BUT WHAT ABOUT INFINITY PLUS ONE?" STERNLY, I SAY UNTO THEM, "FOOLS!"

"YOU CANNOT HAVE INFINITY PLUS ONE!"

GREAT JOWLS OF JORGULAX! WE FACE INFINITY, THE LARGEST AMOUNT OF ALL!

TRULY, ZOM CANNOT IMAGINE A MORE NUMEROUS FOE!

HUH! SOUNDS LIKE SOME ULTIMATE QUANTITY NEEDS A GOOD TALKING TO! WHERE'S THE ESCAPE HATCH?

ZOM INSTALLED AN AIRLOCK IN THE FLASH AVENGER'S LEFT EAR.

JIM, DON'T SCRAP WITH INFINITY! REMEMBER WE'VE A DATE LATER!

SORRY, CAROL! THAT SWAGGERING SUM DESERVES A LESSON...

...FROM MY PYTHAGORAS-GRANTED POWER OF MATHEMATICS!

EMERGING FROM THE FLASH AVENGER'S AUDIAL CANAL, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE CONFRONTS HIS OMNI-NUMERICAL OPPONENT...

YOU *DARE* CHALLENGE THE ONE AND ONLY *INFINITY?*

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! THERE'S **INFINITE** INFINITIES, CHUM! HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF **CANTOR?**

UM...YOU MEAN *EDDIE* CANTOR?

MATHEMATICIAN **GEORGE** CANTOR, YOU ILLIMITABLE BERK! INVENTOR OF SET THEORY, HE DEMONSTRATED **MULTIPLE** INFINITIES, SUCH AS THE INFINITE SUBDIVISIONS BETWEEN ANY ADJACENT WHOLE NUMBERS!

MODERN MATHEMATICIANS SUGGEST LOSING INFINITY **ALTOGETHER!**

B-BUT...WHERE WOULD I *GO?*

LUCKILY, CANTOR'S DISCIPLE DÁVID **HILBERT** DESIGNED AN INFINITE **HOTEL** THAT COULD ACCOMMODATE YOU!

I'VE THEIR CARD RIGHT HERE!

WH-WHAT IF ANY *OTHER* INFINITIES SHOW UP?

THEN GUESTS MOVE TO TWICE THEIR **ROOM-NUMBER,** LEAVING INFINITE **ODD-NUMBERED** ROOMS AVAILABLE!

YOU'LL BE **FINE!**

SOON, BACK INSIDE THE FLASH AVENGER'S HEAD...

WELL DONE, CAPTAIN! THAT ABSTRACT CONCEPT LOOKS UTTERLY CONFOUNDED!

HA! DON'T THANK ME, VULL...THANK **PYTHAGORAS!**

NOW, LET'S GET THE FLASH AVENGER BACK ON TRACK FOR **POSTHUMIA!**

:SIGH!: NOW THAT'S WHAT I **CALL** A SUPER-MARVEL KING OF THE SPACEWAYS!

THE RAKISH DIRIGIBLE CONTINUES THROUGH ECTO-SPACE...

UGGH! THOSE THINGS ARE ZITZING **UNBELIEV-ABLE!**

AS BRITISH CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT? AYE, THEY'RE CALLED **"THE UNBELIEVABLE ONES."**

EVENTUALLY...

THE COSMIC AWARENESS OF **GALILEO** TELLS ME THIS MUST BE POSTHUMIA **AHEAD!**

JUMPING JETPACKS! LOOK AT THOSE INDESCRIBABLE **COLOURS** IN ITS **ATMOSPHERE!**

INDEED, FUTURE ADVENTURESS SATIN ASTRO! ZOM'S FAVOURITE IS THE SOMEHOW **SARCASTIC**-LOOKING HUE THAT IS THE POLITICAL OPPOSITE OF **PURPLE!**

NOW, THE NECRO-PLANET **POSTHUMIA** REDIRECTS THE MANY SOULS WHO GET **LOST** IN A DIMENSION WITH FLOATING **EYEBALLS** FOR **LANDMARKS!**

WE SHALL PARK THE FLASH AVENGER IN ITS CAPITAL CITY, **MYSTICOPOLIS,** JUST ABOVE THE WORLD'S LEFT EYE-SOCKET.

THEN, FROM THIS MARBLE-CARVEN SPHERE, WE MAY HOPEFULLY BE DIRECTED **HOME!**

AND SO...

Y'KNOW, FOR THE CAPITAL OF A **NECRO-PLANET,** MYSTICOPOLIS SEEMS **LIVELY** ENOUGH!

WELL, IT'S CERTAINLY BUSTLING WITH **JUDGEMENTAL WRAITHS!**

ONCE ZOM'S RESTORED THE FLASH AVENGER, PERHAPS SOME-BODY CAN TRANSPORT US BACK TO **LONDON!**

FEAR NOT, VULL THE INVISIBLE! ZOM IS CERTAIN WE CAN LOCATE A REGIONAL BRANCH...OF THE **ZODIAC!**

THERE! THE FLASH AVENGER IS BLIMP NO LONGER!

S-STAP ME! **THAT** WAS A RUM TO-DO, DON'CHA KNOW?

THANKS, ZOM, BUT WE'VE NO IDEA WHAT THE GOVERN-MENT MIGHT BE UP TO BACK ON **EARTH!**

LET'S ASK IF ANYONE KNOWS THE **WAY** THERE!

BUT, HOURS LATER...

"PARALSECTED DIABOLKARM TROGS"? WHAT DOES THAT EVEN **MEAN?**

AGREED. MANY HERE CONVERSE **ODDLY.**

Z-ZOM? THAT CROCODILE'S **WAVING** AT YOU!

ZOM, BABY! BY MY INSINCERE TEARS, WHAT'S **HAPPENING,** Z-MAN?

GREAT PISCES AND CHIPS! WISE OLD **CROC?** I-IS IT TRULY YOU, OLD FRIEND?

IT SURE **IS**, ZOMSTER! YOU AND YOUR SQUARE BUDDIES CAN THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS... OF THE **ZODIAC!** HA HA! AM I **RIGHT?**

HA HA! YES, I SUPPOSE I **DO** SAY THAT A LOT, DON'T I?

COMRADES, MEET THE WISE OLD **CROC,** A FICTIONAL PULP **SCIENCE-FICTION** CHARACTER AND **BENZEDRINE** HALLUCINATION!

SOUNDS LIKE MY VIGOROUS DEFIANCE OF **LOGIC** IS WHAT YOU CATS COULD DIG THE MOST! HOW CAN I **HELP?**

WELL, WE NEED RETURNING TO LONDON, ENGLAND, ON EARTH, TO PREVENT SOMETHING **SUSPICIOUS!**

SAY NO MORE, CRAZY HEADLESS GUY! I'M YOUR IMAGINARY **CROCODILE!**

MAY THE NIGHT-GNOMES OF NEMBUTAL AND THUGS OF THORAZINE HELP THESE COOL FOOLS TO GET BACK HOME AND SPLIT THIS HEAVY SCENE!

GREAT FLUCTUATING **PHOBOS!** IT'S **WORKING!** WE'RE FADING OUT OF THIS FUNEREAL FUNHOUSE!

THANKS, DRUG-INDUCED ONE! ZOM WILL SEE THEE **LATER,** ALLIGATOR! :CHUCKLE!:

THE SEVEN STALWARTS PLUNGE IN A BREATHLESS ROLLER-COASTER RIDE THROUGH THE PHANTOM, TWILIGHT AND NEGATIVE ZONES, SKELETON TOWN, AND THE FIFTH DIMENSION...

LOOK! IT'S MY IMPISH COUNTERPART, **MARSMITE!**

PLUS **MY** INTERDIMENSIONAL IRRITANT **CAPTAIN LOONYVERSE** AND CAROL'S TRANSCENDENTAL TORMENTOR **ELECTRO-ELF!**

ZOM HAS NO IMPISH COUNTERPART!

UNTIL, FINALLY...

WELL I'LL BE BLOWED! WE'RE IN PICADILLY **CIRCUS!**

GREAT **HEAVENS!** AND THE SITUATION'S EVEN WORSE THAN WE **FEARED!**

LOOK AT **THAT!**

HOLY **SPACE!** I-IT LOOKS LIKE SOME EMERGENCY **TRIAGE** CENTER FOR WOUNDED AND DYING THIRD-RATE **SUPER-HEROES!** WHAT CAN HAVE **HAPPENED?**

AND WHY ARE SO MANY MEDIOCRE COSTUMED **ADVENTURERS** INVOLVED?

LET'S ASK THAT HARASSED BATTLEFIELD **MEDIC!**

HEY, WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE MANGLED LONG-**UNDERWEAR** CHARACTERS?

UM... AND WE'RE SORRY FOR YOUR **LOSS,** INCIDENTALLY.

HYDE

M-MASK MAN WAS JUST A GENERIC HOODED **TOFF,** BUT HE DIED BATTLING THE MONSTER THAT'S ENGULFING **LONDON!**

ENGULFING LONDON? SOUNDS LIKE WE SHOULD GIVE THIS **MONSTER** CHAPPY A **THRASHING!**

I'LL SAY! LET'S TRY THIS DIRECTION, WHERE ALL THE SCREAMS ARE COMING FROM!

I--I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW ALL THIS HAPPENED SO **QUICKLY!**

AYE! ZOM TAKES **ONE** DETOUR THROUGH ECTO-SPACE AND EVERYTHING GOES TO **HADES!**

Y-Y'KNOW, FUTURE HISTORY SUGGESTS BRITISH SUPERHEROES **DIED OUT** AROUND 1964! Y-YOU DON'T SUPPOSE...?

GREAT GÖDEL! LOOKS LIKE FUTURE HISTORY IS **RIGHT,** SATIN...

...BECAUSE I'M NOT SURE THAT **ANYTHING** COULD SURVIVE **THIS!**

IS A SUPER-**EXTINCTION** APPROACHING? IS THE METROPOLIS A MEAL FOR THE **'MASS?** FIND OUT IN CHAPTER FIVE OF OUR TERRIFIC SIX-PART **SPECTACULAR!**

We look forward to receiving your electronic mail! Send it here: tothestars@knockabout.com

Salutations to all you stylistically shipwrecked sailors tumbling in the tides of our torrential TEMPEST! It's your swiftly-sinking subalterns Al and Kev again, barely able to move in our under-the-stairs office space for the mailbags bursting with four or five brief comments from our flagrantly fabricated fan-base! Let's make out we're mulling through your mostly made-up missives and see what we had to say for yourselves!

Dear Al and Kev: Why don't you make Captain Universe more human and approachable by giving him a pet dog called Universe Dog? Universe Dog could be an ordinary dog chosen to receive special powers by a ghostly group of scientifically important dogs whose initials spell the word GALAP. You could use deceased Russian space-dog Laika to provide the 'L', while the 'P' could stand for Pickles, the dog that found the World Cup. I know he isn't scientific, strictly speaking, but he must have been good at finding things, so that's a power. Anyway, once you'd come up with science-dogs for the other three letters, you could have the mild-mannered and short-sighted ordinary dog speak the word and become Universe Dog, the Super-Marvel King of the Dog Spaceways. Except, thinking about it, dogs can't speak. I suppose I've answered my own question, haven't I?

Tyson Sheba, Isle of Dogs

Yes, Tyson. Yes, you have.

Dear Al and Kev: "An ice cream-fuelled teenager whose power must presumably be diabetes." Who is this sweet-toothed individual? I must know immediately!

Siiri Cressey, Yahoo-on-Thames

Siiri – our first, our last, our everything – your letter shocked us so much that we haven't seen our eyebrows for a week. This is because we deduced that since you don't appear to have anything psychologically wrong with you, and since you don't have a ridiculous name like 'Montgomery Shuttlecock' or something, you are probably a real person rather than somebody we've imagined, and, furthermore, you might very well be a girl! Not only that, but your heart-warming response to Tommy Walls and his inadvisable diet has convinced us that with this plucky and loveable character we may have at last found a way to connect with the female readership that have for so long both eluded and despised us. All of which makes it a bit depressing that we're killing him off next issue, although you'll be relieved to learn that it's nothing to do with his cholesterol levels, and he just gets smothered by a monster.

Dear Al and Kev: I love everything about your comic, except why doesn't Marsman wear a proper costume instead of just swimming trunks and his Y-fronts on his head? He always looks like he's making his way home drunk from a stag party. No wonder he can't stop blushing. Anyway, what I like best about your comic is the letters page, and especially all of the reassuringly sensible and noble names of your other readers, so very like my own. At school I am picked on by ignoramuses who say that my name is "bizarre," "made-up sounding," or, that most hated of taunts, "ridiculous." Your letters page is my only sanctuary in an otherwise difficult life, and only when I am reading it do I feel that I am surrounded by people like me, who will accept me for what I am and not dismiss me as ridiculous purely on account of my name. Please, please never let me down. Your vulnerable admirer,

Montgomery Shuttlecock, Burton-on-Trent.

Ah. Right. Montgomery, our old mucker, owing to an unfortunate outcome of the way in which we compile our letters pages, we're afraid that this is a bit awkward. All we can suggest is that while sticks and stones can break your bones, names can never hurt you. Although, obviously, people armed with sticks and stones who think your name is stupid definitely can.

Dear Al and Kev: For my birthday, Dad gave me a deluxe H.C. Edwards Bakelite time-telescope from your advertising pages, even though we've already lost family members thanks to the polythene bag diving helmet and the abandoned refrigerator clubhouse stickers. Well, I think my time-telescope is a swiz. It arrived with a strip of historic slides and do-it-yourself instructions! I converted it using the Interocitor in Dad's garden shed but I think I busted it, because when I looked into my own future I just saw a fat, bald man in Doctor Who pyjamas, and me Aunt Vivian had a nose ring and a Union Jack tattoo on her face. Some joke! We all know the future will be silver togas, jetpacks and caravan parks on the moon. Frankly, if my younger brother's forthcoming bank robbery utilising the I-Can't-Believe-It's-Not-A-Luger goes wrong in any way, my family are seriously considering not basing major lifestyle decisions on novelty items purchased from a children's comic. Yours disappointedly,

Jimmy Magicpatch, Much Gawping-in-the-Hedge

Jimmy, our old rugged cross, we've spoken to Mr. Edwards and he says that he'd like to give you and your family a full refund for any goods which you found less than satisfactory. But he can't. He's in prison.

Dear Al and Kev: Given that the Seven Stars all appear to have been published by different companies, isn't it unlikely that such a group could ever have existed? I'm just saying. Yours,

Heston Weston, Preston

Flaming Nora! We've just remembered that we've left the motor parked on double yellows! Join us in issue five of your terrifically trying TEMPEST for another sobering summit with your malfunctioning mystagogs —

Al and Kev

VULL'S VAULT OF VITAL STATISTICS No. 4:

MARSMAN

The Battler from Barsoom!

Greetings, gossip-gatherers! Vull here with more creepy coverage of my colleagues, focussing this time on interplanetary immigrant GARATH GANZZ. Sent to Earth as a Martian intelligence agent in 1948, arriving during England's oppressive Big Brother regime, and eventually relocating to Bigburg, near Cactusville in Texas, MARSMAN was a one-issue wonder from the prestigious pen of PADDY BRENNAN. Returning to Britain in 1958, Marsman served briefly in U.N. super-team THE SEVEN STARS during 1964 before once more going on the run with teammate SATIN ASTRO. It is not currently known whether he ever returned to the red planet of his origins.

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BLAZING WORLDS

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85¢

PITIFUL HUMAN RACE! PREPARE TO DROWN IN YOUR OWN DREAMS AS *NIGHTMARES* DRAG YOU DOWN!

DARE YOU READ THE *STRANGEST* STORY OF THEM ALL? WE CHALLENGE YOU NOT TO FLINCH FROM...

"THE FAIRY FELLER'S MASTER-STROKE!"

A League LOOK-AND-LAMENT Feature: CHEATED CHAMPIONS OF YOUR CHILDHOOD

No. 5: DENIS McLOUGHLIN

'Ello, our darlin's! It's your comic-book commodores Al and Kev here, accents wandering from Dallas to Dagenham as we invite you to a fifth fandango with our terpsichorean TEMPEST! This issue, since we're posing as a British reprint of pre-code American crime and horror comics, what better victimised valiant to venerate than England's Wild West-worshipping nabob of noir, Denis McLoughlin?

A self-described sickly child, Denis McLoughlin was born in Bolton, 1918, and lived there all his life. Winning a scholarship to art school aged fourteen, he quickly secured employment at an advertising agency which lasted until 1940, when Denis became Gunner McLoughlin, manning the Ack-Ack guns for the Royal Artillery at Woolwich. His proximity to London meant that he could visit prospective employers while on leave, and before war's end he was already providing book-covers and a General Custer comic strip for publisher T.V. Boardman. Demobilised in 1946 and working for Boardman fulltime, he produced numerous cover illustrations before commencing work on the rotogravure comics – printed with a second colour, usually red or green – that were his most well-known accomplishments.

Atypically for British artists of the period, McLoughlin's influences were Americans like Alex Raymond and Will Eisner. With his brother Colin and other writers he filled the comics with the alternating exploits of Roy Carson, a transatlantic private eye working in a weirdly Americanised London, and Victory Vanguard inductee Swift Morgan, a space adventurer of the Flash Gordon variety. These were augmented by reprinted U.S. Quality Comics properties like 'Blackhawk' and 'The Spirit,' the rotogravure format enduring until the early 1950s, by which time the artist had embarked upon his own abiding passion for Americana through the *Buffalo Bill Wild West* series of annuals. Lovingly researched and including unusual material like articles on ghost-towns, these lasted until 1961 when Denis returned to his cover illustration duties – often using purchased props for reference and his wife Dorothy as a model – before Boardman ceased publishing in 1967.

He provided comic strips for I.P.C/Fleetway's *Lion* and *Tiger* weeklies until 1971, when he took two years off to produce *Wild and Woolly,* his encyclopaedia of the West, then returned to the company to find that his promised employment was no longer open. From 1974 he worked on D.C. Thomson adventure titles such as *Wizard* and *Victor* before being moved, in 1983, to their *Commando Library* series of digest war comics, a genre he hated. Now 65 but unable to afford to retire, Denis laboured at this disagreeable task for twenty years before, in 2002, he took his own life with a Colt Frontier revolver that friends had always assumed was one of his reference replicas. After a more than fifty-year career, this tireless craftsman had finally wearied.

Well, bust our braces if it isn't a funny old business, this cheerful children's chapbook lark! So, until our next serving of sequential shame, please accept an adoring adieu from your cuddly-but-condemnatory colleagues –

Al and Kev

ALAN (The Writer) MOORE
KEVIN (The Artist) O'NEILL
BEN (The Colourist) DIMAGMALIW
TODD (The Letterer) KLEIN
CHRIS (The U.S. Publisher) STAROS
TONY (The U.K. Co-Publisher) BENNETT
JOSH (The U.K. Co-Publisher) PALMANO
3D Process by Charles Barnard & Christian LeBlanc

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BZZZ! GO **ON,** RICHARD! MURDER YOUR OWN ***FATHER!*** I, THE GOD OSIRIS, ***DEMAND*** IT! BZZZZ!

Y-YES! I SEE IT ***ALL*** NOW! I SEE IT IN EXQUISITE ***DETAIL!***

A STRANGE TALE OF SINISTER WORLDS!

*"ONCE I WAS A **MAN.** ONCE I WAS ARTIST RICHARD **DADD,** BEFORE I BECAME A FRIGHTENED, SCUTTLING **THING,** TRAPPED IN THE PERFECT, UNBEARABLE DREAM OF...*

"MY PAINTING, MY PURGATORY!"

I CREEP NOW THROUGH AN ATMOSPHERE OF DOOM, SHRIVELLED AND DEFORMED IN A NIGHTMARISH ***WONDERLAND.***

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO COME HERE WHEN ***YOU*** DIE, THEN HEED MY ***STORY.***

I WAS BORN, 1817, IN ***KENT...***

*"EXCELLING ARTISTICALLY, **SIR THOMAS PHILLIPS** TOOK ME, AGED 24, THROUGH GREECE, TURKEY, SYRIA AND **EGYPT.***

*"SOMETHING **HAPPENED.** BLINDING SUNLIGHT ON THE NILE--THE BACK OF A MAN'S HEAD--SHAME--POSSESSION...I CAN'T REMEMBER."*

I ONLY KNOW IT WAS MY FIRST STEP ON A ROAD LEADING ***HERE,*** TO THIS EERIE REALM OF EYE-WRENCHING ***PALACES*** AND GRIMLY PURPOSEFUL ***ACTIVITY.***

THIS HIVE CRAWLING WITH ***FAERIE*** AND ITS AIR OF IMMINENT ***CATASTROPHE...***

...FOR IT WAS IN EGYPT THAT THE GOD ***OSIRIS*** ENTERED ME, DISGUISED AS A FILTHY ***FLY!***

*"RETURNED DISTRAUGHT TO KENT, IT WAS **OSIRIS** WHO CONVINCED ME MY KINDLY FATHER WAS **THE DEVIL.**"*

BZZZ! ***KILL*** HIM, RICHARD! KILL ***SATAN!*** BZZZZ!

R-RICHARD? RICHARD, ***NO...***

*"FLEEING TO PARIS, OSIRIS TOLD ME A FELLOW **PASSENGER** WAS NOW LUCIFER INCARNATE."*

BZZZ! HIM ***NEXT,*** RICHARD! USE YOUR ***RAZOR!*** BZZZ!

SACRE BLEU!

LE FIGARO

"FORTUNATELY, I WAS OVERPOWERED."

COMMITTED TO ***BEDLAM,*** ON ITS CLOSURE IN 1863 I WAS TRANSFERRED TO ***BROAD-MOOR.***

*"BEDLAM SQUIRMED WITH VISION AND INSANITY: TURNER'S MOTHER, JOHN MARTIN'S ARSONIST BROTHER, CAT-FIXATED LOUIS WAIN, PEOPLE HAUNTED BY **PHANTOMS,** PEOPLE HAUNTED BY MALIGNANT **FAIRIES.**"*

TH-THE HATEFUL THINGS ARE EVERY-WHERE, DAMN THEM! ***EVERYWHERE!***

*"IN BEDLAM, 1855, I COMMENCED MY **MASTERPIECE.**"*

JUST 26 INCHES BY 21, IT CONTAINED A UNIVERSE OF EXCRUCIATING MARVELS, TINY FAIRIES SHELTERING TINIER FAIRIES UNTIL THE EYE GROWS SICK AND FRIGHTENED.

TRULY, IT WAS ***THIS*** DREAD COUNTRY, WITH EVERYWHERE FANTASTICAL CREATURES BUSTLING TO AND FRO ON MISSIONS OF TERRIBLE ***URGENCY.***

I FINISHED IT, 1864, IN BROADMOOR HOSPITAL'S GHASTLY CONFINES.

"MY NOTORIETY GREW. COBHAM RESIDENT CHARLES DICKENS TOOK GUESTS TO VIEW THE MURDER SITE."

...AND HERE THE ARTIST RICHARD DADD CUT HIS FATHER'S **THROAT.**

H-HOW TERRIBLE!

DICKENS ALMOST SEEMED **OBSESSED.**

SOME SUGGESTED HIS UNFINISHED NOVEL, ITS PROTAGONIST RETURNED FROM EGYPT, SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE MYSTERY NOT OF EDWIN DROOD, BUT RICHARD **DADD.**

DYING OF LUNG DISEASE IN BROADMOOR, 1886, I FOUND MYSELF HERE. THE SELF-PORTRAIT I'D INCLUDED BECAME RICHARD DADD, TRAPPED IN HIS OWN **PAINTING...**

...AN ANXIOUS GNOME, ENDLESSLY AWAITING THE SHATTERING BLOW THAT SHALL UNLEASH **FAERIE** AND END THE HUMAN **WORLD.**

LONG PLANNED BY FAERIE'S QUEEN AND HER **MAGICIAN,** THE CALAMITY OCCURS **TODAY,** AND NOTHING CAN **PREVENT** IT.

"EVERY LAND SHALL FALL BEFORE THE SUBLIME HORRORS OF ITS MONSTROUS **FOLKLORE,** ITS UNSHACKLED **FABLE.**

"CRUCIAL INSTITUTIONS SEIZED BY **TROLLS!** POPULATIONS DRIVEN TO DEMISE BY **APPARITIONS!"**

CIVILIZATION SHALL BE TORN APART IN A STORM OF ITS OWN GROTESQUE **FANTASIES.**

MANKIND WILL BE CONSUMED BY ITS SECRET FEARS AND **IMAGININGS,** AS WAS **I.**

A TERRIFIED HUMANITY SHALL FLEE IN **VAIN** FROM THE REMORSELESS FANCIES OF ITS INFANCY, ITS CERTAIN DOOM COMMENCED.

THE FACELESS EXECUTIONER SHALL LIFT HIS MALLET HIGH ABOVE THE BRITTLE SHELL OF ALL EARTH'S MISERIES.

THE FAY ASSEMBLY SHALL CEASE IN ITS INFERNAL CHITTERING. AN AWFUL **HUSH** SHALL FALL WITH THE DESCENDING HAMMER-HEAD...

"...AND A TORRENTIAL SQUALL OF FICTION SHALL ENGULF THE GLOBE."

The TEMPEST

FIVE: THE FAIRY FELLER'S MASTER-STROKE

HEH HEH!

WELCOME, DEPRIVATION-DIVAS, FROM YOUR OSTLER OF AUSTERITY, **THE NEMESIS OF NEGLECT!** HERE'S A STYGIAN TALE OF LONDON AFTER DARK THAT I CALL...

CRIME

THE CITY OF DREADFUL

GOOD LORD! =CHOKE!= WITH ALL LONDON'S **ELECTRICALS** BLOWN AND NO **ENTERTAINMENT,** WE'RE HAVING TO CONFRONT THE MEANINGLESS, HOWLING ABYSS OF **OURSELVES!**

TH-THIS IS HORRIBLE! **WE** SHOULDN'T BE WITHOUT HEAT, LIGHT OR PROTECTION FROM **PREDATORS!** WE HAVE HOMES AND **JOBS!**

CRIME

HEH HEH! IN THE GASLIGHT ERA OR THE BLITZ, DARKNESS AND LONDON WERE CLOSE **PALS,** SELDOM **APART!**

LATELY, THOUGH, LONDON'S **FORGOTTEN** WHAT HAPPENS UNDER COVER OF NIGHT: MURDER, TWISTED PASSION, AND, AT VAUXHALL CROSS, **ESPIONAGE!**

D-DARLINGS, HOW GHASTLY! THANK HEAVENS OUR EMERGENCY GENERATORS ARE PROVIDING LIMITED POWER...

NOT ENOUGH TO PINPOINT OUR QUARRY'S EXACT **WHEREABOUTS!**

J-2, J-5, INVESTIGATE TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, WHERE WE LAST HAD **SURVEILLANCE.**

WH-WHAT ABOUT **YOU,** M?

ME? I THINK I'LL HEAD FOR THE BASEMENT GARAGE AND TAKE YOUNG QUELCH'S LATEST ***SUPER-CAR*** OUT FOR A SPIN.

ONCE I'VE GOT THE HANG OF IT I'LL JOIN TWO AND FIVE NEAR TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD. I WANT TO RESOLVE THE NIGHT SITUATION ***MYSELF.***

THREE, FOUR, AND SIX--YOU MONITOR THINGS HERE. AS SOON AS COMMUNICATIONS ARE RESTORED, CALL ME WITH ANY ***DEVELOPMENTS.***

I HATE BEING KEPT IN THE ***DARK.***

HEH HEH! ***SPIES*** PLOT IN THE BLACKOUT, ANXIETY-AMIGOS, BUT OVER IN FITZROVIA, SO DO ***CRIMINALS!***

...WHEREBY MY ELECTROWAGON'S DRIVING ***ITSELF*** BACK TO CRICKLEWOOD.

WELL, THAT'S ***SOMETHING.*** ORLANDO, WAS THERE ANY REPLY FROM GRETA ***MORS?***

WORRYINGLY, YES. SHE'S HEARD FROM ***NEMO.*** SOMETHING'S HAPPENED IN THE BLAZING WORLD AND EVERYONE'S RETURNING TO ***LINCOLN.***

US ***TOO.*** GRETA WILL BE AIRLIFTING US OUT SHORTLY.

JUST AS WELL, AFTER THAT BOTCHED ***ASSASSINA-TION.***

THIS SOUNDS ***OMINOUS.***

I MEAN, COULD WHATEVER'S OCCURRED IN THIS "BLAZING WORLD" BE CONNECTED WITH THE INTERPLANETARY ***CATASTROPHE*** I CAME HERE FROM 2996 TO ***AVERT?***

HMMPH. WELL, IF ***SO,*** SHOULDN'T ***WE*** RELOCATE TO THIS LINCOLN PLACE AS WELL?

VERY POSSIBLY, CAROL, BUT WE'VE MORE ***PRESSING*** CONCERNS. I TELEPATHICALLY SENSE ***INTRUDERS*** NEARBY. I SHOULD ***INVESTIGATE.***

HEH HEH!

LOOKS LIKE THINGS ARE HOTTING UP EVEN ***WITHOUT*** ELECTRICITY, POVERTY-PUNDITS! LET'S POP OUTSIDE AND INVESTIGATE ***OURSELVES!***

CRIME

HEH HEH! SEEMS OUR SECRET AGENTS AREN'T SO **SECRET!**

HERE'S WHERE THE DRIVERLESS **LORRY** WAS REPORTED. YOU THINK IT'S CONNECTED TO **NIGHT?**

The DRUM 'N' BASSMENT

POSSIBLY. PERHAPS WE SHOULD CHECK THAT LOWLIFE **CELLAR** CLUB...

LOOK OVER HERE FIRST.

YOU BEHOLD AN ATTRACTIVE WOMAN.

"I SAY! WHAT AN ABSOLUTE STUNNER." "CAN WE HELP YOU, MISS?"

I SAY! WHAT AN ABSOLUTE **STUNNER!**

UH... C-CAN WE HELP YOU, MISS?

YES, YOU CAN. THAT MAN THERE IS YOUR LATE COLLEAGUE, AGENT KING, SEEKING GHOSTLY **VENGEANCE.**

"I-IT CAN'T BE. YOU'RE DEAD! DEAD!"

I-IT **CAN'T** BE...

UM...J-2? I SAY, OLD BOY, WHAT'S GOING ON?

YOU'RE DEAD! **DEAD!**

WHAT'S GOING ON IS THAT YOUR FORMER EMPLOYER MS. NIGHT HAS FOUND YOU, AND WANTS YOU DEAD.

"OH, BLOODY HELL! IT'S HER!"

OH, BLOODY **HELL!** I-IT'S **HER!**

BLDAM! BLDAM!

AA--:<

HEH HEH! WELL, MISERY-MAVENS, TURNS OUT IT'S **WOMEN** WHO ARE FROM MARS, AFTER ALL!

LET'S SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN **VAUXHALL,** RECESSION-ROOTERS!

CRIME

BASSMENT

SOME POWER'S BACK, BUT J-2 AND J-5 AREN'T **ANSWERING...**

NEVER MIND THAT! TH-THESE BACKLOGGED COMMUNICATIONS ARE **UNBELIEV-ABLE!**

CRIME

HEH HEH! WHY, WHATEVER'S **WRONG,** PENURY-PALS?

HOW DO YOU MEAN?

I MEAN THE WORLD'S NATIONS ARE BEING OVERRUN BY THINGS THAT AREN'T ***REAL!***

ANIMAL-HEADED HUMANOIDS FROM THE ***POLAR*** REGIONS, VAMPIRES IN THE ***BALKANS,*** DJINNS DESTABILISING ***SYRIA...***

ALERT!

TH-THESE MONSTERS ARE ***EVERYWHERE!***

WH-WHAT ABOUT HERE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE ***THEATRE*** DISTRICT?

OH, DEAR LORD: WE'VE GOT DOZENS OF SPRING-HEELED JACKS IN WHITECHAPEL, VISIONARY SPECTRES IN LAMBETH, AND IN THE WEST END, IT'S...

NO. NO, THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.

"I-IT'S THE ***WEREWOLVES OF LONDON!***"

DUFFING

HEH HEH! HOW'S THAT FOR ***HAIR-RAISING,*** FAMINE FANS? I'D SAY LONDON'S IN ***FUR*** A ***HOWL*** OF A TIME!

NOW, ENJOY OUR NEXT TANGLED ***TAIL!***

CRIME

FROM the DEEP

YOU'RE HAVING THAT OPIUM-DREAM AGAIN, YOU AND THE BIZARRE CREATURES WHO ARE YOUR FRIENDS, FRANTICALLY ESCAPING A DELIRIOUS FAIRYLAND...

JACK, THIS IS A CANDY-COLOURED ***NIGHTMARE!*** PROSPERO INTENDS TO OVERTHROW ***HUMANITY!***

APPARENTLY SO. WE MUST REACH MY ***NAUTILUS*** AND ***FLEE*** THIS HELLISH ELYSIUM.

WHY-AYE! BUT BEFARE RETRUFFLIN' YER GLUBMARINE OR MESALF'S ROSE O' NOWHERE, WE'M AN ***OBSTRUCLE*** TO MULLIFY!

ULP! JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING I FORGOT TO ***PACK!*** BACK IN A JIFFY!

I MIGHT HAVE TO TAKE ME COAT OFF FER THIS ONE.

I-IT MEANS "MONSTER OF THE PEOPLE," SO IT'S A LEVIATHAN OF ***POPULISM...***

OH GOD, JACK, IT'S THE ***LAKE*** WE PASSED COMING HERE, WHERE THE FAIRIES WERE FISHING FOR SOMETHING ***ENORMOUS.***

I-IN FAERIE LORE, THERE'S A LAKE-DWELLING ENTITY CALLED ***DEMOGORGON...***

THE BLUCKANEER O' THE UNTERNAL STAMPS **ASIDE** YE, HULCULEAN TREMENDITY!

MR. COGHLAN, THAT UGLY BASTARD'S BLOCKING OUR **ESCAPE** ROUTE. I'M GOING TO PUT A COUPLE OF ROCKETS IN ITS EYE.

AH, BLAZIN' TACARIGUA! 'TIS LIKE A VIOLENT **SONNET** Y'ARE.

FOLLER YER **HEART,** ME FIERY DARLIN'.

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
BEPLUG YER LUGS, SHAPEMITES, LEST I BELLOWS US TER BETEL-GEUSE!
RIGHT, THAT'S IT. MR. COGHLAN'S DOWN. I'M BLOWING ITS HEAD OFF.
PERHAPS I CAN CONTACT THE NAUTILUS, HAVE MR. VAN DUSEN SEND IN AN AIRSTRIKE. EITHER THAT, OR...
J-JACK, IT'S...IT'S JUST FLATTENED EVERYBODY! IF MR. COGHLAN AND THE GALLEY-WAG COULDN'T STOP IT, TH-THEN...
READY YOUR WHISTLE, REFEREE! SURREALIST SPORTS-MANSHIP SHALL SAVE THE DAY!

SECONDS OUT!
EN GARDE!
CHOCKS AWAY!
FORE!
WELL DONE, THE LITTLE FELLER! SO ***THAT'S*** THE SCYTHE YOU WON OFF THE GRIM REAPER.
WELL, TO BE FAIR, HE WAS A LOT GRIMMER ***AFTER*** I'D WON IT.
EXCELLENT WORK, ALL OF YOU. IF MR. ISHMAEL IS UNINJURED WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR ***EVACUA-TION.***
BIT CONCUSSED, BUT NOTHING'S BROKEN, CAPTAIN. WE CAN PRESS ON.
YOU KNOW, CONSIDERING WHAT A FRIGHTFUL ***ABOMINATION*** THAT THING WAS, IT MAKES FOR A JOLLY CONVENIENT ***FOOTBRIDGE.***
AGREED, BUT WE STILL DON'T HAVE A MOMENT TO SPARE. THE FAERIE QUEEN'S REVENGE MUST BE CONSUMING THE WORLD AS WE SPEAK.
ONCE ABOARD THE SUBMARINE, I'LL CONTACT ***GRETA.*** SHE CAN RETRIEVE MS. NIGHT AND MS. ORLANDO FROM LONDON, AND CONVEY EVERYONE TO ***LINCOLN.***
THERE IS NO OTHER PLACE ON EARTH THAT OFFERS A ***SOLUTION*** TO THIS GREAT PREDICAMENT.
THE NAUTILUS AND I MUST MAKE ANOTHER JOURNEY BACK TO MY ILLUSTRIOUS FAMILY'S ISLAND SANCTUARY.
PERHAPS OUR ***LAST.***

THEN THE DREAM TWISTS INTO A NEW SHAPE, LIKE HOOKAH SMOKE, AND ABOARD AN ASTOUNDING UNDERSEA-BOAT YOU SKIRT THE NEWLY-FORTIFIED COASTS OF TOYLAND...

JACK, THIS IS ***HORRIBLE.*** WE'VE ESCAPED THE BLAZING WORLD, BUT SO HAVE THOSE FLIGHTS OF ARMOURED ***FAIRIES*** AND ANIMAL-MAN ***BATTLESHIPS*** WE SAW.

WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ***TOYLAND?***

DOUBT

ANXIOUS

WORRY

WELL, I MADE ***RADIO*** CONTACT. OLYMPIA'S SIDING WITH ***PROSPERO.*** THE TOYLANDERS HAVE NO LOVE FOR HUMANITY.

OH, GOD.

A-AT LEAST THE PINK ***CHILD'S*** HAPPY. MR. COGHLAN MADE BILLIONS OF FAIRIES SOUND LIKE A ***GOOD*** THING.

THE PINK CHILD'S VISION OF PERFECT BEAUTY MUST REMAIN ***INTACT.*** YOUR FRIEND ENGELBRECHT, CONVERSELY, SEEMS ***IMPERTURBABLE.***

HE TOLD ME HE WAS FISHING FOR ***COMPLI-MENTS.***

SO, IS THE PINK CHILD A PERMANENT RESIDENT ON LINCOLN NOW?

ADORABLE

UM...NO. SHE AND MR. COGHLAN ARE JUST THE FIRST OF ***MANY*** PERSONAGES I'VE INVITED THERE.

I SEE.

YOU KNOW, I REMEMBER FIRST VISITING THE BLAZING WORLD WITH YOUR ***GRANDMOTHER***...ABOARD THE ***OLD*** NAUTILUS, NATURALLY.

HMM. MINA, REGARDING MY ***NEW*** NAUTILUS...?

I'M AFRAID I MAY NOT HAVE BEEN ENTIRELY ***HONEST*** WITH YOU.

FOOLWAR FATE ENDING

AND THERE THE SHIMMERING VISION ENDS, RETURNING AS ALL DREAMS DO TO THE PLACE FROM WHENCE IT CAME: FROM THE HUMAN ***MIND.*** FROM THE ***UNCONSCIOUS...***

FROM THE DEEP!

THEY CALL ME ***MIND MAN,*** PSYCHICALLY EMPOWERED BEFORE BIRTH. ARRIVING IN A LONDON OVERWHELMED BY ***CHAOS,*** THE ONE THING MY REMARKABLE BRAIN ***DOESN'T*** KNOW IS...

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT...

3:08 A.M.

ALL★STAR★CAST! RAVE REVIEWS!

IT'S OBSESSED ME SINCE AGREEING TO VISIT ENGLAND WITH JAMES LOGAN, ONLY ***HOURS*** AGO...

SO, WE'LL CROSS THE ATLANTIC TO ASSIST ***GARATH*** AND ***SATIN?***

CERTAINLY...BUT I'M PICTURING THE TIME 3:08 A.M., AND I DON'T KNOW ***WHY.***

HMM. WELL, TO BE IN LONDON BY THEN WILL REQUIRE ABILITIES JIM LOGAN DOESN'T ***HAVE.*** YOU'D BETTER STAND ***BACK.***

YOU KNOW, MATTHEW, THIS FEELS SO ***STRANGE.*** I HAVEN'T PRONOUNCED THIS WORD IN ***DECADES.***

The Brothers Jim.

GALAP!

I COVERED MY EYES FOR THE FLASH OF TRANSFORMATION, BUT STILL TELEPATHICALLY SAW WHAT HE SAW, THOSE IMMORTAL PRESENCES, GRAVELY GAZING DOWN.

AFTER ALMOST FIFTY YEARS, IT WAS ***THE RETURN OF CAPTAIN UNIVERSE!***

SOON WE SOARED OVER OCEANS BOILING WITH MYTHICAL CREATURES...

THIS IS ***UNBELIEVABLE!*** WHAT'S GOING ***ON?***

I--I SENSE IT'S CONNECTED TO EVENTS IN ***LONDON.***

WHAT THOSE EVENTS WERE I COULD NOT SAY. I ONLY REGISTERED SOME INHUMAN ENTITY, SWOOPING THROUGH THE NIGHT AS WE WERE, CLOSING IMPLACABLY ON ITS DESTINATION.

OTHER THAN THIS, THERE WAS JUST THAT INSISTENT DEADLINE, ECHOING AGAIN AND AGAIN THROUGH MY UNBEARABLY SENSITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS...

3:08 A.M.

3:08 A.M.

3:08 A.M.

REACHING LONDON, MY ANXIETIES **WORSEN.**

HOLY SPACE! LET'S MAKE FOR LITTLE MONMOUTH STREET...

N-NO...I'M VISUALIZING SOME SORT OF **SPY** HEAD-QUARTERS, IN **VAUXHALL.**

I KNOW THE PLACE.

MATTHEW, I SENSE THIS NIGHTMARE IS **GLOBAL.**

AGREED. BUT THE CATASTROPHE FACING VAUXHALL AT 3:08 A.M. BEGGARS **BELIEF.** WE MUST **HURRY!**

WELL, WE'RE HERE... WITH SECONDS TO **SPARE!**

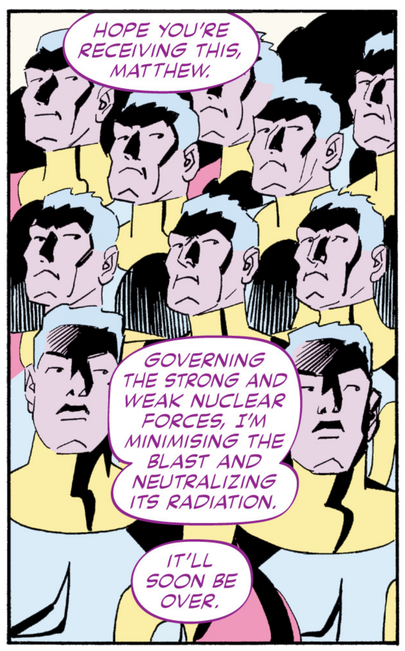
C-CAPTAIN, GIVEN THE SCALE OF WHAT'S ABOUT TO **HAPPEN,** I FEAR WE MAY ALREADY BE TOO **LATE.**

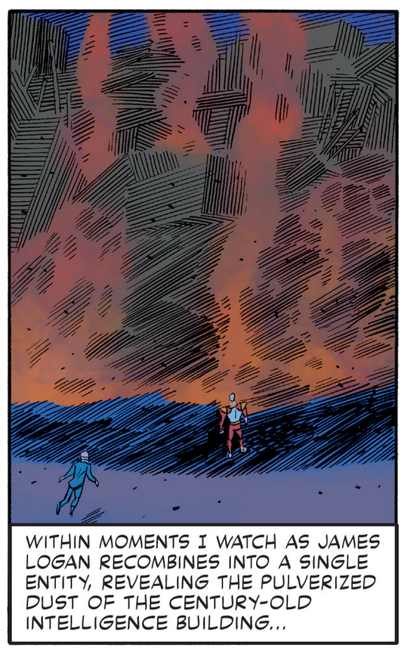
I-IT'S EXACTLY 3:08 A.M. WE'RE POWERLESS TO PREVENT THIS.

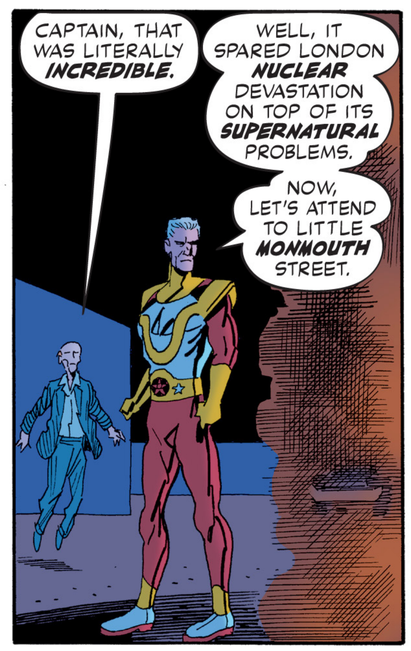
WITH THE PYTHAGORAS-GRANTED POWER OF **BI-LOCATION...**

...OR EVEN **POLY-**LOCATION...

...IT'S **NEVER** TOO LATE.


HOPE YOU'RE RECEIVING THIS, MATTHEW.
GOVERNING THE STRONG AND WEAK NUCLEAR FORCES, I'M MINIMISING THE BLAST AND NEUTRALIZING ITS RADIATION.
IT'LL SOON BE OVER.


WITHIN MOMENTS I WATCH AS JAMES LOGAN RECOMBINES INTO A SINGLE ENTITY, REVEALING THE PULVERIZED DUST OF THE CENTURY-OLD INTELLIGENCE BUILDING...


CAPTAIN, THAT WAS LITERALLY INCREDIBLE.
WELL, IT SPARED LONDON NUCLEAR DEVASTATION ON TOP OF ITS SUPERNATURAL PROBLEMS.
NOW, LET'S ATTEND TO LITTLE MONMOUTH STREET.

SATIN AND GARATH SHOULD BE SAFE IN OUR STAR CHAMBER AGAINST LONDON'S MANIFESTING MYTHOLOGY.
THE WEREWOLVES AND SPRING-HEELED JACKS? LET'S HOPE SO...
CLOAK

...THOUGH I SUSPECT OUR ORDINARY HUMAN MONSTERS PUT SUCH THINGS TO SHAME.
WE STREAK TOWARDS FITZROVIA, MY FEELINGS OF SOMETHING OVER-LOOKED BRUSHED ASIDE.

THOUGH THE TELEPATHIC MARSMAN AND I HAVE BRIEFED EACH OTHER EN ROUTE, ARRIVAL STILL HOLDS MANY ***SURPRISES.***

SATIN? AND IS THAT ***CAROL?*** WHAT'S GOING ***ON?***

THESE ARE VULL'S ***OTHER*** TEAMMATES, EMMA AND ORLANDO. THEY'RE TAKING US TO THEIR SOUTH PACIFIC ***ISLAND*** IN THAT ***STEALTH FIGHTER.***

YEAH, LOOK, ALL THIS ***ASSEMBLING*** IS GREAT, BUT CAN WE HURRY THINGS ***UP?***

YOUR PINK PAL CAN'T HOLD BACK THOSE WOLF-MEN MUCH LONGER...

NOTHING IN THIS STREET IS EDIBLE OR OF INTEREST.

"GNARR?" "RRAGH!"

GARATH? HE'LL BE ***FINE.***

CAROL, IT'S SO GOOD TO ***SEE*** YOU...

GNARR?

RRAGH!

J-JIM! I'D PLANNED ON TRAVELLING BY JET WITH ***STOKES...*** UNLESS YOU'D ***CARRY*** ME?

OKAY, GRETA, THAT'S ALL THE ***TROPHIES.*** LET DOWN THE ***LADDERS.***

I WATCH AS THESE EXTRAORDINARY BEINGS PREPARE TO EVACUATE THE CITY AND LAND OF THEIR GREATEST ADVENTURES, WHILE THE WORLD ENDS ABOUT THEM.

EVERYTHING SEEMS HEAVY WITH ***FINALITY...***

THERE THEY GO.

Y'KNOW, ABANDONING LONDON FEELS ALMOST ***COWARDLY.***

WE'VE NO ***CHOICE.*** GARATH SAYS THIS MADNESS IS ***EVERY-WHERE.***

CLOAK

WE RISE INTO THE CHAOTIC NIGHT, AND STILL I SENSE SOME DANGER ***DISREGARDED.***

YES...WHO KNOWS HOW LONG EVEN THIS ***LINCOLN ISLAND*** PLACE CAN PREVAIL?

CLOAK AERO

SOME UNNOTICED PERIL, FILLED WITH IMPLACABLE HATRED AND SEEKING REVENGE. STILL WORSE IS MY FEELING THAT THIS CONCERNS ***WHAT HAPPENED AT 3:08 A.M.!***

Good day, everyone. This is Professor S.F.X. Van Dusen communicating on all channels.

My predictions of global catastrophe in 2010 appear to have been realised. Bulletin updates will be provided.

Having long planned for this eventuality, our prominent colleagues from the science criminal community are currently converging on Lincoln Island and what might be called...

...THE CHARACTER ARK.

Meanwhile, reports from *ARDISTAN* suggest that British forces and Taliban fighters have united against a resurgence of the war-torn country's *GIANT* population.

As with similar occurrences worldwide, this is presumably part of the Blazing World's unprecedented act of *AGGRESSION.*

CUCKOO

This declaration of war on the rational world is confirmed by our leader's returned *NAUTILUS,* accompanied by the 'pataphysical *ROSE OF NOWHERE.*

JACK? WHAT DOES VAN DUSEN MEAN BY "CHARACTER ARC?"

I SUSPECT IT'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ***HUMOUR.*** NOW, LET US MAKE ***HASTE...***

Reportedly just landed at the Dakkar City Roburdrome are Lord Horror's entourage, plus their ladyships Hortense and Eloise *SCARAMANGA*.

ARRIVALS

Also, we have news from *DUNEDIN*, off New Zealand. Naval authorities are engaged with a previously submerged entity, called by its worshippers *CTHULHU*.

SEC

This supposedly augurs the imminent return of the *LLOIGOR*, or "Old Ones."

THAT MUST HAVE BEEN WHAT THEY WERE PLOTTING WITH ***PROSPERO*** IN THE ***BLAZING WORLD***, MAYBE EVEN BACK IN ***1958...***

JACK, WHERE'S EVERYONE ***GOING?***

THE SAME PLACE AS WE ARE: TO THE ***VOLCANO.***

"In other world events, the subterranean *VRIL-YA* people have overwhelmed the Newcastle area, emerging from its abandoned *COLLIERIES*..."

RUN, FINBARR! THEY'RE COMING! SURGING UP ***OLD, DISUSED SHAFTS,*** THEY'RE ***COMING ALL OVER FULCHESTER!***

YINK!

SNURP!

FNARR!

BAKER

...while in southern England, an apparent warp-gate in *OXFORD* is releasing Jabberwocks, Snarks, and even anti-matter *BOOJUMS* into our reality.

JACK, WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU SAID YOU HADN'T BEEN ENTIRELY ***HONEST...***

I'VE ***MISLED*** YOU. THE SUBMARINE ISN'T MY NEW NAUTILUS.

"Satellite images of the Transylvania region show that the vampire city of *SELENE*, dormant for decades, has suddenly become active.

"Concurrently, attempts to reactivate 2001's *BOWMAN* expedition have discovered a giant monolith on *JUPITER*.

"Connections to Blazing World activity are probable."

Pursuant to this is fresh monolith activity in the Moon's *TYCHO* crater.

WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S THE MOST ADVANCED MODEL OF THE NAUTILUS I'VE EVER ***SEEN.***

THAT'S JUST THE RESULT OF OUR ROUTINE ***UPGRADES.***

WE'RE HEADED DOWN THIS WAY, INCIDENTALLY.

In more welcome news, the Robur-drome reports the arrival of *CRETA MORS*, along with persons and valuables retrieved from England.

Expected shortly with details of the nuclear detonation at M.I.5 Headquarters are members of superhuman ensemble *THE SEVEN STARS*, currently approaching Lincoln.

DID HE SAY THE SEVEN ***STARS?***

I BELIEVE SO. AH, MS. ***KIDD.*** MAY I SAY YOU'RE MANAGING THIS COMPLEX COMMENDABLY?

WRANGLING VOLCANOES IS IN MY ***BLOOD,*** CAPTAIN. THE SITE'S ALONG THERE...

Elsewhere, logging facilities at *ESSENWALD* have allegedly succumbed to *FOREST ENTITIES...*

...which may relate to a similar excursion of paranormal beings from the so-called *DEEP DARK WOODS* in Washington State.

Remember that Lincoln residents should access the volcano through the Malcolm Lowry tunnel.

This also applies to our island's many distinguished *VISITORS.*

CLOAK

AQUA

It is now zero minus four hours. Please stand by for further announcements.

SO...SO YOUR NEW NAUTILUS IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ***FORM*** OF SUBMERSIBLE?

NO. WE ***NEMOS*** ARE TRADITIONALLY MASTERS OF THE ***DEEP,*** WHILE CLAN ***ROBUR*** ARE MASTERS OF THE ***AIR.***

I AM THE SCION OF **BOTH** DYNASTIES.

I SHALL BE MASTER TO THE **STARS.**

SHIVER OUR SUPERNOVAE! FOR YOUR TICKET TO THE RIDE OF A LIFETIME, DON'T DARE MISS THE LAST EVER ISSUE OF YOUR TRIUMPHANT YET TERMINAL ***TEMPEST!***

SEVEN STARS

LONDON

AFTER FACING A RIVAL SUPERTEAM, BATTLING EVERY KNOWN BRITISH SPACE-ADVENTURER AND NAVIGATING A NIGHTMARISH **NETHER-DIMENSION,** CAN EVEN OUR SEVEN SAVIOURS PREVAIL AGAINST...

THE MENACE OF THE 'MASS?

RETURNED TO A LONDON AFFLICTED BY A HIDEOUS **GROWTH,** OUR HEROES FIND THEIR COSTUMED CONTEMPORARIES **DECIMATED...**

AREN'T YOU **SPEED GALE?** WHAT'S **HAPPENING?**

TH-THE VICTORY VANGUARD'S **PERISHING!** EVEN **GARY'S** COMATOSE! P-PLEASE HELP US!

PSHAW! NOT **LIKELY!**

B-BUT THAT THING'S SPREADING TOWARDS **MAYFAIR!** I-IT'S EVEN DEVOURING BETTER-**OFF** PEOPLE!

OH, GARY! **GARREEEE...**

B-BETTER-OFF PEOPLE? THAT'S GOING TOO **FAR!**

TOO STUNNED FOR **BANTER,** THE FLASH AVENGER RECALLS HIS OWN TRAUMATIC ORIGINS...

"DASH THAT FATEFUL NIGHT! MATER AND PATER, SIR HENRY AND LADY ARRHYTHMIA GAUNT, WERE RETURNING FROM A **SERVANT-AUCTION...**"

S-SPARE A COPPER, GUV?

POOR

OH! THAT FRIGHTFUL **CREATURE!** WHAT ON EARTH **IS** IT?

CONFOUND YOU, SIR! HOW DARE YOU FLAUNT YOUR INTOLERABLE CONDITION BEFORE MY WIFE AND CHILD?

POOR

"NATURALLY, FATHER HORSEWHIPPED THE BOUNDER, BUT MY CHILDHOOD INNOCENCE WAS **SHATTERED.**

"SHABBY WORKING-CLASS PEOPLE ACTUALLY **EXISTED!** LIFE WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME.

POOR

"RAISED ALONE SAVE FOR MY WEALTHY FAMILY, I DEVELOPED MY SKILLS UNTIL I COULD IDENTIFY A CHATEAU '94 REES-MOGG BY MERELY **LISTENING.**

"THEN, ONE EVENING..."

PAUPERS ARE A SCRUFFY, UNGRAMMATICAL LOT. I MUST BECOME WHAT THEY **FEAR...**

...A FLASHILY-DRESSED SARCASTIC **TOFF** WHO'LL **BELITTLE** THEM!

"THUS WAS BORN THE **FLASH AVENGER,** SCOURGE OF THE SOCIALLY VULNERABLE."

STITCH THIS, **FORELOCK MAN!** AND SMARTEN YOURSELF **UP,** WOT?

AARRNGH! B-Bless you, sir.

TUG!

"IN 1956, MARRYING ADVENTURE-POPPET **GAIL GARRITY** WE PRODUCED A SON, NAMED **HENRY** AFTER MY FATHER.

"WITH MY HEROIC LIFESTYLE, I BARELY SEE THEM.

"SO ANYWAY, THAT'S WHO I AM AND HOW I CAME TO BE, DONCHA KNOW?"

Y-YOU HAVE A WIFE AND **CHILD?** YOU UNSPEAKABLE **ROTTER!**

CRIPES! WAS I SAYING ALL THAT OUT **LOUD?** I THOUGHT IT WAS A **FLASHBACK.**

CAPTAIN? THE BATTLE'S **EPICENTRE** IS JUST **AHEAD** OF US...

UNNGHH...I-IT'S NO GOOD. I CAN'T USE MY **NUCLEAR** ABILITIES IN THE CITY, THE SAME AS **ACE HART** AND **VAL.**

W-WITHOUT THEM, THAT ABOMINATION JUST SPAT ME **OUT!**

TH-THEN THE ONLY THING STANDING BETWEEN LONDON AND DESTRUCTION IS PLUCKY LITTLE **TOMMY!**

WAIT! WHY ARE THERE SO MANY **SUPER-PEOPLE** MILLING AROUND? AREN'T YOU MEMBERS OF THAT **VICTORY VANGUARD** SET-UP?

WE'RE **ORIGINAL** MEMBERS. I'M **CRASH BRITTANUS,** DESCENDED FROM EARTH'S FIRST HUMANS AFTER LIFE EMERGED FROM A **METEORITE** SITE IN **AFRICA.**

THAT'S ACTUALLY VERY **INTERESTING**...BUT HOW DID YOU ALL COME TO ASSEMBLE AGAINST THIS **CREATURE?**

PURE **LUCK.** THE GOVERNMENT SENT US ON ROUTINE **MANOEUVRES,** AND THIS **FUNGUS**-MONSTER SUDDENLY SHOWED UP!

HMM! COULD THIS BE A **PUBLICITY STUNT** THAT'S GONE **WRONG?**

L-LOOK, EVERYONE! THAT HORROR'S **ADVANCING!** T-TOMMY'S OUR LAST **CHANCE!**

AND, NEARBY...

THAT THING'S GETTING **CLOSER,** BUT FORTUNATELY I'VE JUST EATEN THREE FAMILY BLOCKS OF **NEOPOLITAN!**

CHUCKLE! I ALMOST **PITY** THAT SLITHERING BLOB...

...WHEN ONE SIMPLE **GESTURE** WILL GRANT ME THE SINGLE POWER I NEED TO **OVERCOME** IT!

THE LUCKY WALLS SIGN!

T-TOMMY...?

WELL, I'M GUESSING THAT MONSTROSITY IS THIS **'MASS** WE'VE HEARD ABOUT.

YOU'RE LUCKY THE **SEVEN STARS** ARE HERE TO SAVE THE DAY!

A-AND GRAB TOMMY'S **GLORY?** YOU PROVOCATIVE **SWINE!**

LOOK WHO'S **TALKING!** DIDN'T YOU INVADE OUR SECRET HEADQUARTERS UNDER LITTLE MONMOUTH STREET LAST THURSDAY MORNING?

HA! THANKS FOR THE **DIRECTIONS!** YOU'VE PROVIDED ME WITH AN INGENIOUS **PLAN!**

ENJOY YOUR FINAL MOMENTS OF **BEING** BEFORE YOU WINK FROM EXISTENCE **FOREVER!**

UH... WH-WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?

WE'VE GOT NO IDEA.

LOOK, IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, WE'D BETTER SUBDUE THIS CRAWLING **BLASPHEMY.**

JUDGING BY ALL THESE PULVERISED **SUPERMEN,** THAT MIGHT PROVE **DIFFICULT.**

HEY, ISN'T THAT SKELETAL WRETCH MR. **MUSCLE?**

I-IT SIPHONED MY **BODY MASS!**

I'M **THROUGH** WITH ADVENTURING. M-MAYBE I'LL JOIN THE FAMILY BUSINESS, SELLING **CLEANING PRODUCTS.**

WHAT A GHASTLY **ENTITY!** IT IS NEITHER CRAB, NOR GOAT, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE...OF THE **ZODIAC!**

KNOWING WHAT IT **IS** MIGHT SUPPLY THE KEY TO ITS **DEFEAT...**

OF **COURSE!** THE **KEY!** THAT'S THE **ANSWER!**

I PURCHASED THIS KEYRING SIX YEARS AGO. IT COMMEMORATES THE WESTMINSTER ABBEY FUNGUS-ASTRONAUT, A RETURNED **SPACEMAN** TRANSFORMED INTO A **MONSTER.**

YES...MY BROTHER SAID THAT HAPPENED IN 1953, JUST BEFORE I JOINED THE **U.N.**

THE CREATURE PERISHED THANKS TO A PROFESSOR **QUATERMASS,** BUT WHAT IF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES RETAINED **SAMPLES?**

GROWING THEM INTO **THIS** ABOMINATION? WELL, THAT WOULD EXPLAIN ITS **NAME.**

AT LEAST WE KNOW WHAT IT **IS!** LET'S **ATTACK!**

FAIR ENOUGH, BUT WHAT'S OUR **BATTLE PLAN?** I SAY WE ROUGH THAT BLIGHTER **UP** WHILST MAKING DISPARAGING **QUIPS!**

HUH! I'M MORE IN FAVOUR OF GIVING THAT ZITZING ZITZER A TASTE OF MY **GONE-GUN!**

REMEMBER THERE MAY BE INNOCENT **VICTIMS** TRAPPED IN THAT SENSATE **SARGASSO!** WE MUST USE OUR SUPERHUMAN ABILITIES WITH **CAUTION!**

HMM! IN THAT CASE LET'S SEE IF I CAN DO SOME LOW-VOLTAGE VIOLENCE TO ITS **EXTREMITIES!**

GOOD IDEA, CAROL!

SATIN, WHY DON'T YOU SEE HOW CHUMMY HERE LIKES 30th CENTURY TECHNOLOGY, WHILE I TRY A MORE PHYSICAL APPROACH?

COMING UP!

TH-THESE TENTACLES GROW BACK FASTER THAN MY **GONE-GUN** CAN **DISAPPEAR** THEM!

SOUNDS LIKE YOUR WONDERFUL 30th **CENTURY** ISN'T SO ADVANCED **AFTER** ALL!

DIDN'T YOU **HEAR?** I SAID...

LEAVE HER. SHE'S PROBABLY REMINISCING ABOUT HER **BEGINNINGS,** DONCHA KNOW?

SILENTLY, SATIN ASTRO RECALLS HER PAST...AND **FUTURE!**

"DESPITE MY CHRONONAUT **AMNESIA** SYNDROME, I RECALL BEING A BIO-ENGINEERED SOLDIER FOR EARTH'S 30th CENTURY **RULER.**

"WITH ENHANCED INTELLIGENCE, WE-- PRIVATE **ASTROVIK** AND PRIVATE **STEELE**-- WERE SMART ENOUGH TO **DESERT** AND BECOME **SPACE-CRIMINALS.**

TAXI

"ALTHOUGH UN-MARRIED, BURT AND I WERE **LOVERS** IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR RACY FUTURISTIC **MORAL CODE.**

"WE HAD MANY ADVENTURES, ALWAYS WITH EMISSARIES OF EARTH'S TYRANT, THE SO-CALLED 'LORD OF MARS,' HOT ON OUR HEELS.

"EVENTUALLY, IN EARTH'S MONSTER-HAUNTED **HINTERLANDS,** WE CONTRIVED A DESPERATE **PLAN...**

"...ALTHOUGH AFTER MY SUBSE-QUENT **TIME-JUMP,** I CAN REMEMBER ONLY **FRAGMENTS.**

"I RECALL A DOMED **CITY.** A STOLEN **TIME MACHINE.** I THINK BURT WAS **KILLED.**

"SOMEHOW, I ENDED UP IN AMERICA'S MIDWEST, IN 1958.

BIGVILLE 10 Miles

"THOSE NEXT YEARS I FOUND **ACTING** WORK, MOSTLY SPACE VILLAINESSES, WITH AMERICA'S BOOMING **HERO** INDUSTRY.

"WITH THAT BUSINESS INCREASINGLY **REGULATED,** I MOVED TO **ENGLAND.**

PROP RINGS

"IT WAS HERE, SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, THAT I WAS CONTACTED BY THE MYSTERIOUS INDIVIDUAL NAMED **VULL THE INVISIBLE,** AS ALL MY TEAMMATES HAD BEEN.

"LIFE'S GOOD, BUT I'VE A FEELING THAT SOMETHING **IMPORTANT** HAS BEEN **FORGOTTEN."**

SATIN'S ATTENTION RETURNS TO THE PRESENT AS CAROL (ELECTROGIRL) FLANE CALLS OUT IN DISTRESS...

HELP, SOMEBODY! THE MORE I **FRY** IT, THE BIGGER IT **GETS!** I-IT MUST METABOLISE **ENERGY!**

DON'T WORRY, CAROL! I'M COMING!

GOSH, **THANKS!** YOU'VE SAVED MY ELECTRIC **BACON...** AND AFTER I WAS SO SNOOTY ABOUT YOUR **INEFFECTIVENESS!**

I THINK WE'RE **ALL** PROVING UNPREPARED FOR THIS UNUSUALLY EARLY BIOLOGICAL WEAPON.

THOSE **RIVAL** SUPERHUMANS ARE GETTING WIPED **OUT!**

I--I SEE WHAT YOU **MEAN.** THAT LOOKS LIKE AN INJURED ACE **HART** BEING CARRIED FROM THE BATTLEFIELD BY HIS **GIRLFRIEND.**

YES...WHILE THE PURPLE **HOOD** WILL BE LUCKY TO OUTLAST HIS **AMMUNITION.**

THE CREATURE'S **UNSTOPPABLE.**

I'M GUESSING IT RESULTS FROM WHAT WE CALL IN THE 30th CENTURY A **XENO-BLOOM...** INTERPLANETARY SPORES THAT INFECT **SPACEFARERS** AND THEN DEVASTATE THEIR **HOMEWORLDS.**

ONCE SUCH CULTURES **ESTABLISH** THEMSELVES, IT'S PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO **CONTAIN** THEM.

GREAT EDISON'S **GHOST!** I HADN'T REALISED HOW MUCH OF LONDON IT HAD ALREADY **SWALLOWED!**

IF YOUR FUTURE HISTORY'S RIGHT, THIS MUST BE WHY MOST BRITISH COSTUMED CHARACTERS **DISAPPEARED** DURING THIS DECADE! THEY DIED **HERE!**

WELL, IF WE DON'T WANT TO **JOIN** THEM, WE'D BETTER **DO** SOMETHING!

THE RATE THIS STUFF **GROWS,** EVEN A **THOUSAND** OF ME WOULD BE NO MORE USE THAN SATIN'S **GONE-GUN!**

ANY **IDEAS,** VULL?

N-NOT REALLY. MY INVISIBILITY IS CLEARLY USELESS. I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THIS THING RELIES ON VISUAL **PERCEPTION!**

WHAT ABOUT **YOU,** ZOM? CAN'T YOU USE YOUR POWERS...

...OF THE **ZODIAC?** I FEAR NOT, UNSEEN ONE!

MY MUCH-VAUNTED TALENT FOR TURNING HUMAN BEINGS INTO ANYTHING I **PLEASE** IS TO NO AVAIL AGAINST THIS FREAKISH **FUNGUS!**

EVEN IF IT WAS ONCE A TERRESTRIAL **ASTRONAUT,** NO TRACE OF THAT HUMANITY **REMAINS!** MY ASTROLOGICAL ABILITIES ARE PROVING **FRUITLESS!**

I FEAR THAT ZOM'S ASSESSMENT IS **ACCURATE.** MY TELEPATHIC PROBES CAN LOCATE NO ORDERED CONSCIOUSNESS FOR ME TO **OVERRIDE** OR EVEN **COMMUNICATE** WITH.

IT SEEMS IMPERVIOUS TO OUR UNEARTHLY SKILLS.

NO ORDERED **CONSCIOUSNESS,** EH? THAT EXPLAINS WHY IT'S IGNORED MY BARBED COMMENTS AND PATRONISING **TONE!**

PROPERLY **DRIED,** PERHAPS I COULD SMOKE MY WAY THROUGH IT, WOT?

THIS IS NO TIME FOR **LEVITY,** MY FLASH FRIEND!

I AGREE. PERHAPS WE SHOULD GIVE **UP** ON LONDON, DESTROYING BOTH IT AND THE 'MASS TO SAVE THE **PLANET!**

Y-YOU MEAN IT'S TIME TO TURN JIM'S ARCHIMEDES-BESTOWED **NUCLEAR** CAPABILITY LOOSE?

NO! I WON'T **ALLOW** IT!

WITH RESPECT, VULL, SATIN MIGHT BE RIGHT! LOSING LONDON'S PREFERABLE TO LOSING THE **WORLD!**

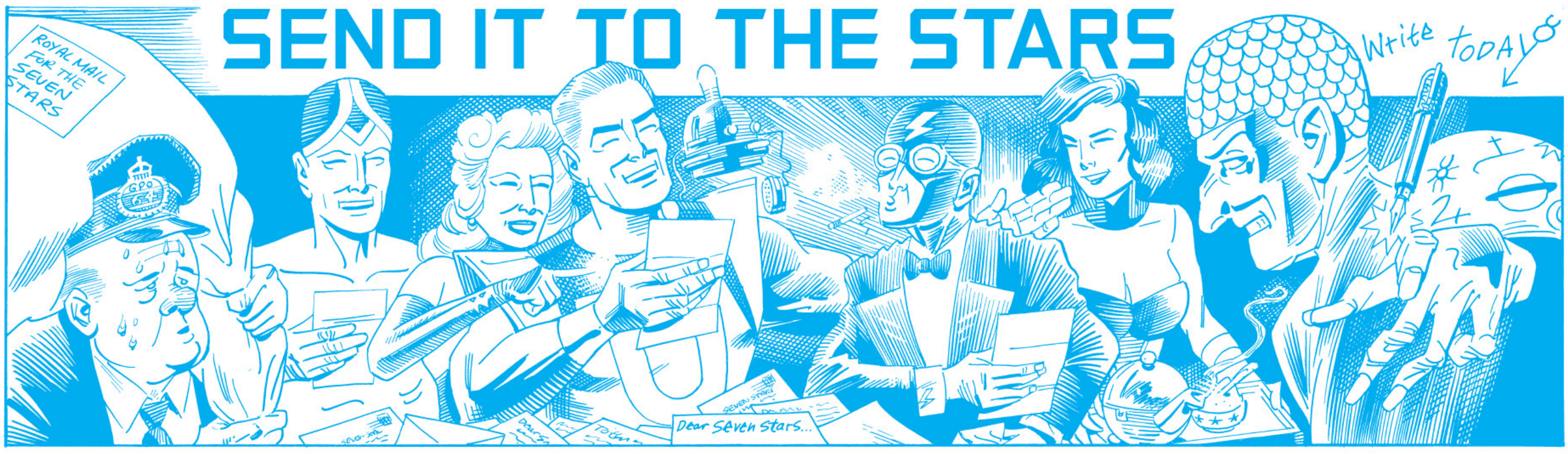
B-BUT SURELY THERE **HAS** TO BE A BETTER WAY?

I DON'T SEE ONE. IT'S CLASSIC **MORALITY:** SACRIFICING THE **FEWEST** LIVES TO SPARE THE **MANY!**

HMM. TH-THEN PERHAPS I MIGHT HAVE AN **ALTERNATIVE...**

...ALTHOUGH IT'S AS **UNFORGIVABLE** AS VAPORISING THE **CAPITAL!**

WHAT IS VULL'S SHAMEFUL **PLAN?** FIND OUT IN THE **CONCLUSION** OF OUR INCREDIBLE SIX-PART **NOVEL!**



We look forward to receiving your electronic mail! Send it here: tothestars@knockabout.com

Tally-Ho to all you TEMPEST-tormented travellers out there! It's your dissociative dream-weavers Al and Kev, here in our patently pretended publishing premises and surrounded by few or less crudely-conceptualised communications from our largely delusory devotees! Why don't we steam open an entirely ethereal envelope or two and find out what's on your brains?

Dear Al and Kev: Like, I'm sure, many of the readers here in the early 1960s, after reading a chapter of your 48-pages-including-front-cover single published issue of The Seven Stars, I like to put it down and pause for two months or sometimes even longer while I really absorb the full philosophical ramifications of each unfolding episode. For this reason, I have only just finished perusing part four, "Captives of the Creepyverse", and may I say that it has shaken me to my core. As a keen divinity student with a calling to the clergy, I was horrified by your very plausible depiction of an afterlife composed of random floating stuff and obsolete shading effects, surely the creation of no sane deity. I have subsequently abandoned my faith and am now a heroin-pusher and an active Satanist. Some may say that this is a drastic reaction to a single book containing the implausible and often-violent exploits of supernaturally empowered beings, but as a theologian that is kind of how I roll. Yours,

Cedric "Smackhead Beelzebub" Whittington, Pontefract.

Well, Cedric, when it comes to religious matters, we always think back to what our dear old mothers said on the subject, which was that it didn't matter what we believed as long as we weren't hurting anybody else. Of course, that said, we didn't get loads of people hooked on H or cut out their hearts as an offering to our dark master, but that was then. We're not judging.

Dear Al and Kev: Would it be at all possible to focus a bit more on the character of Tommy Walls? Maybe even have the magazine be only about him? My whole family began reading your magazine when I told them Tommy Walls was in it. My parents have been fond of Walls Ice Cream since their childhood. I've overheard them talking about the frosty treat with their friends, more specifically how they have "incorporated it into their lovemaking". I'm not sure what this means, but it must be delightful if it involves Walls Ice Cream. I've often stumbled on my father using cut-and-paste to superimpose Tommy Walls's face onto some rather funny pictures of men doing an odd kind of wrestling. I seem to have gone off on a bit of a tangent, but please just ditch the rest of the characters and focus on the real star (Tommy Walls).

Billy "High Priest of Walls" Billfinger, Paramus.

Billy, your moving missive has left us feeling both elated at receiving our second letter from a real person who we haven't made up, and hugely disheartened that both letters are entirely concerned with the (evidently) breakout character of Tommy Walls, who we short-sightedly killed off five or six pages back. Please tell your parents that we're very sorry, and we hope that our poor business decisions haven't affected their personal relationship. Oh, God, what have we done? If only comics were the kind of medium where you could kill off a character for cheap dramatic effect and then have them turn up a few issues later as if nothing had happened.

Dear Al and Kev: While you must be very excited about the current global media frenzy over your character Tommy Walls – the countless headlines, the *Saturday Night Live* parody with Alec Baldwin as Tommy, the unprecedented statement from the Vatican, etc., etc. – I think you should know that here in the ranks of crappy black and white 1960s British comic fandom, there's a fast-growing buzz about a character who could be even bigger than the Ice Cream-reliant Icon himself! I refer of course to Speed Gale's endlessly fascinating boy partner, Gary. Obviously, his major appeal is that it's every lad's dream to dress up as a sort of teddy-bear and perform dangerous acts under the supervision of a similarly-dressed adult, but this ignores the essential enigma of Gary: if the teddy-bear costume is meant to conceal his identity, why is he called Gary? Unless, of course, Gary is not his actual first name, which only raises a bigger question – why is he called Gary? The rumour here in what we call c.b.a.w.1960s.B.c.f. is that you'll be addressing these puzzles in a forthcoming graphic novel entitled Gary: We're So Glad We Didn't Render Him Comatose In The Same Issue Where We Killed Tommy Walls. Whatever you do, don't ever let anything bad happen to this find-of-the-millennium! Yours,

Brent Trent, Gwent

Technically, Brent, Gary could wake from his coma next issue. Although, to be honest, he won't.

Dear Al and Kev: It's distressing to imagine that in the far future women will still have tight figure-hugging costumes and stripper-type names like 'Satin Astro'. Although, thinking about it, I suppose it could be worse. Sincerely,

Margaret Atwood, Gilead-on-the-Yukon

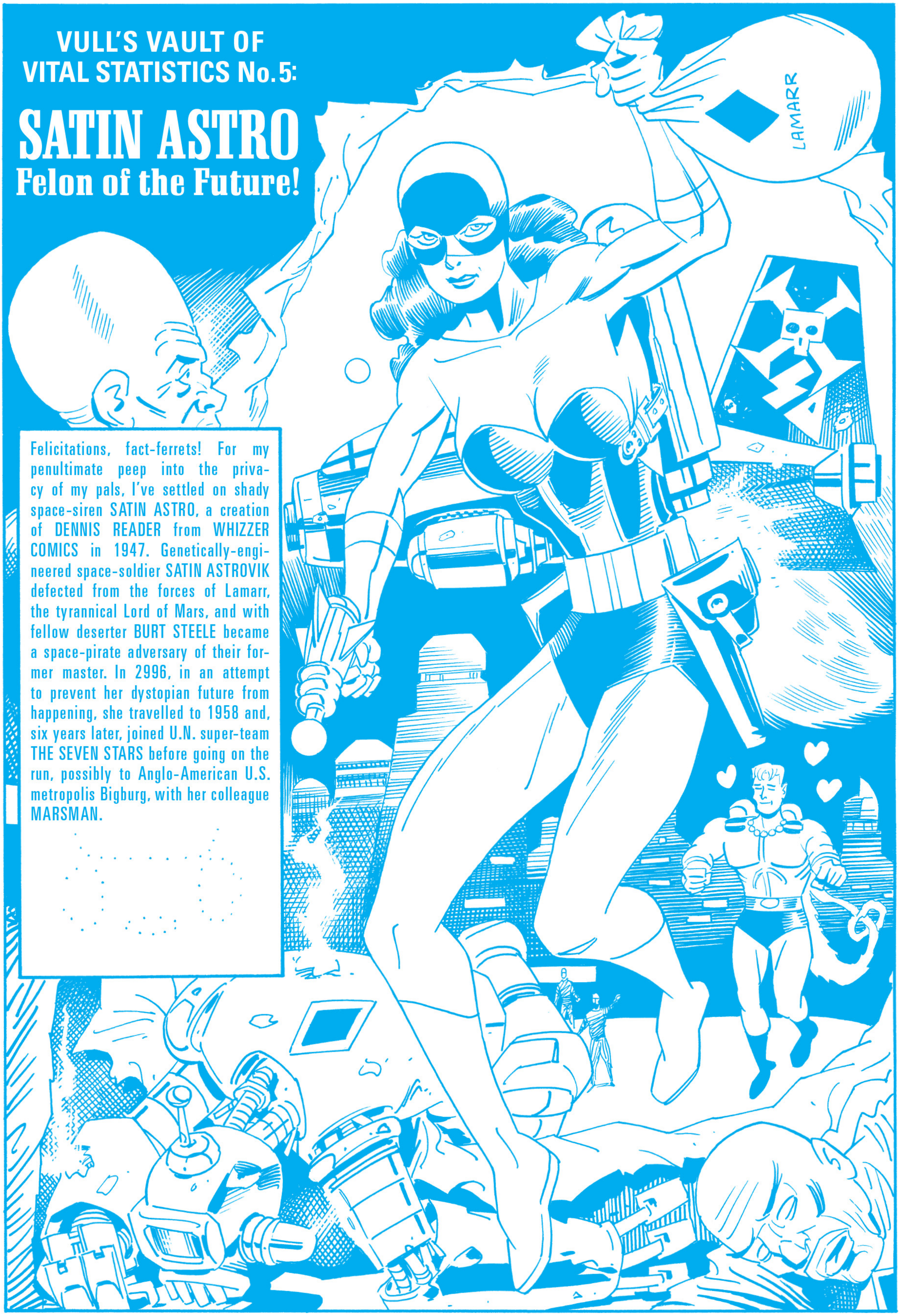
Margaret, if you'd been lucky enough to be christened 'Silky Stardust' or something, we're sure you'd cheer up and see things differently. Anyway, once more we're out of room and/or the will to live. Be here next issue for a final flurry of falsified fan-mail with your febrile factotums –

Al and Kev

VULL'S VAULT OF VITAL STATISTICS No. 5:

SATIN ASTRO

Felon of the Future!



Felicitations, fact-ferrets! For my penultimate peep into the privacy of my pals, I've settled on shady space-siren SATIN ASTRO, a creation of DENNIS READER from WHIZZER COMICS in 1947. Genetically-engineered space-soldier SATIN ASTROVIK defected from the forces of Lamarr, the tyrannical Lord of Mars, and with fellow deserter BURT STEELE became a space-pirate adversary of their former master. In 2996, in an attempt to prevent her dystopian future from happening, she travelled to 1958 and, six years later, joined U.N. super-team THE SEVEN STARS before going on the run, possibly to Anglo-American U.S. metropolis Bigburg, with her colleague MARSMAN.

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The LEAGUE of EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

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A.D. FRILL POWER OVERLOAD!!

FEATURING

ALAN MOORE • KEVIN O'NEILL
BEN DIMAGMALIW • TODD KLEIN

TERMINUS SIX • DATELINE: NOW
IN ORBIT ONE LAST REVOLUTION

A League LOOK-AND-LAMENT Feature: CHEATED CHAMPIONS OF YOUR CHILDHOOD

No. 6: RON TURNER

Stripe us pink, is that the time already? Departing deities Al and Kev here, edging towards extinction in this tear-stained, terminal TEMPEST, and for our final *2000AD*-themed curtain-call, what better robbed royalty than England's sovereign of science fiction, the remarkable Ron Turner?

Norwich-born in 1922, Ron's childhood years were saturated by H.G. Wells and *Amazing Stories,* copying the covers of which seems to be his only tutoring in art. Aged just 14, already an apprentice at London publishing house Odhams, he was soon providing illustrations for their *Modern Wonder* magazine. Drafted in 1940, Ron returned to illustration later in that decade with the adventures of "The Atomic Mole" for Scion's *Big* series. By this point he had acquired an agent, Mr. Hall – who had, apparently, only one client, and was mistakenly believed to be Turner himself – and from then on it seems that hardly anybody ever met Ron Turner.

For Odhams he produced paperback covers, and in 1953 worked on the *Tit-Bits Science Fiction Comics* series, followed by "Space Ace" for *Lone Star.* In 1954 he took over "Rick Random: Space Detective" for Amalgamated Press's *Super-Detective Library,* drawing it for the next five years and making it his own. As the appetite for science fiction waned, Turner worked on publications such as *Practical Mechanics,* where it may be he acquired his skill for credible and handsome futuristic hardware – though some claim the enigmatic artist was a garden-shed inventor in his own right.

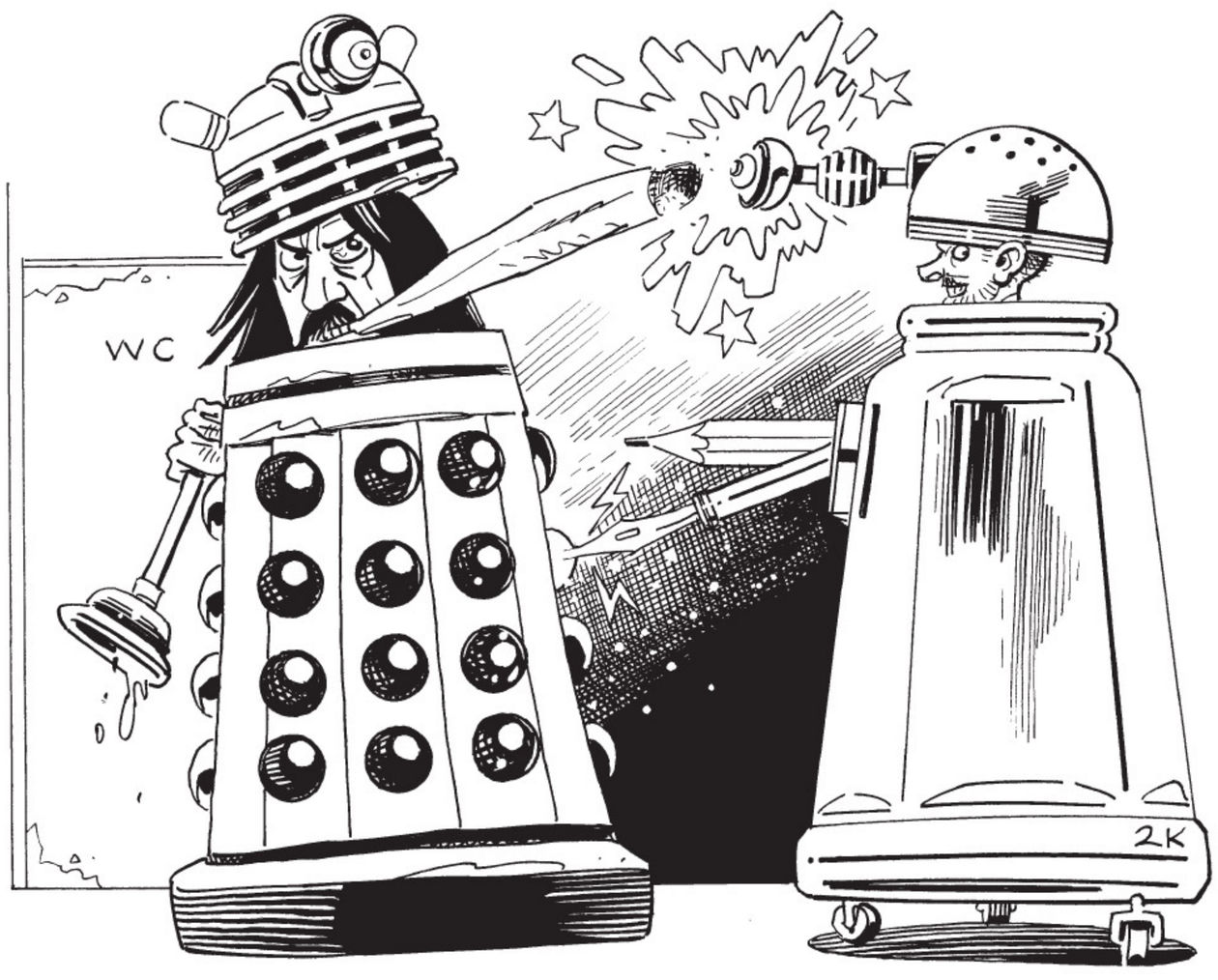
In 1965 he crafted his first colour strip, a "Stingray" episode for *TV Century 21,* and then the following year began what some think his finest comic work: "The Daleks," beautifully adorned with tropical pulp colours. Working on various Gerry Anderson characters until 1969, Ron returned to Amalgamated Press, now Fleetway, to work on their *Tiger and Hurricane* weekly. When IPC absorbed Fleetway, he found himself working with writer Steve Moore on "Wonder Car" for *Whizzer and Chips,* where editorial assistant Kevin O'Neill marvelled at Turner's immaculate brushwork.

The later 1970s saw Turner working for IPC's *Action* and the same company's *2000AD,* on both Judge Dredd and a revived Rick Random, once again with Steve Moore. Turner worked on *Action* – now *Battle Action* – until 1984, when it is believed that Mr. Hall died and many publishers met Turner for the first time. With a new agent, Turner fan John Lawrence, Turner worked on comic strips for independent publishers, before returning to paperback cover illustration in the 1990s. He contributed a new "Daleks" strip to *Doctor Who Magazine,* dying of a heart-attack in 1998, aged 76.

Leaving no family, friends, or anecdotes, Ron Turner dedicated his life to comics, then vanished without a trace. Faceless and forgotten, he stands for all our cheated champions.

And with that, we're sprinting for the exit before the national anthem. Look after yourselves, look after your creators, and spare a fond tear for your absconding archangels –

Al and Kev



ALAN (The Writer) MOORE
KEVIN (The Artist) O'NEILL
BEN (The Colourist) DIMAGMALIW
TODD (The Letterer) KLEIN
CHRIS (The U.S. Publisher) STAROS
TONY (The U.K. Co-Publisher) BENNETT
JOSH (The U.K. Co-Publisher) PALMANO

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NEAR FULWORTH COVE, SUSSEX, 1904.

So, are we finished with all this?

I fear so, but please don't trouble yourself. Mrs. Hudson's son can clear it away presently.

I've greatly enjoyed your company, Miss Murray.

And I yours.

Let me help you up.

You're sure you won't reconsider advising my ensemble...

...of exceptional individuals? Quite sure. Increasingly, I suspect such personages are to humanity's ***detriment.***

How so?

Even when ***benevolent*** we often make matters worse... and then there are those like Professor ***Moriarty.***

Thank you for finally eliminating him forever, incidentally.

You're very welcome.

Surely we do ***some*** good?

Overall, I think not. Our very existence disrupts society.

Consider my ***bees,*** their timeless, golden culture predicated on ***uniformity.***

Even one uniquely empowered insect, individually motivated, would destabilise the ***colony.***

The hive would die, its surviving inhabitants compelled to flee in uncertainty, seeking another home...

...and what then, my delightful Miss Murray, in certain lights so reminiscent of dear Irene Adler?

What ***then?***

LINCOLN ISLAND, 2010.
THE FINAL DAY.

The TEMPEST

SIX: THEN, THE IMMORTAL BLUE...

2010 A.D.

Talent Token

Replaceable Script Unit
NOEL O'MARA

Replaceable Art Unit
LIONEL VINKE

Replaceable Colour Unit
WILMA DIMEBANG

Replaceable Letters Unit
TED DINKLO

HURRY ***UP!*** WE FIRE THE ISLAND IN AN HOUR!

SATIN? SATIN ***ASTRO?*** Y-YOU WON'T RECOGNISE ME, BUT...

...BUT YOU'RE VULL THE INVISIBLE? YES, I KNOW. LISTEN, WE NEED TO TALK.

MY RECOVERED MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE SUGGEST A THOUSAND YEARS OF CATASTROPHE--

--COMMENCING HERE ON EARTH, BEFORE ENGULFING THE MOON, VENUS AND ***MARS.***

"IN NORTH AMERICA, PRESUMABLY DESCENDED FROM THE BLAZING WORLD'S ANIMAL HYBRIDS, HORDES OF BEAST-PEOPLE--PREDOMINATELY ***GORILLAS***--WAR AGAINST A ROGUE A.I.'S KILLER ***MACHINES.***

"OF EARTH'S PLANETARY NEIGHBORS AND THEIR FATE, I KNOW ONLY THAT A MARTIAN WARLORD EMERGES WHO, BY MY ERA, GOVERNS THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

"YOUR EXODUS IS ***TIMELY.***"

YES. THAT IS THANKS TO THE PROGNOSIS OF LINCOLN'S ***OWN*** A.I., MR. VAN ***DUSEN.***

YOUR INTELLIGENCE REGARDING THE MOON AND PLANETS SOUNDS VITAL. I HOPE WE CAN DISCUSS IT DURING OUR ***VOYAGE.***

ME TOO. SEE YOU LATER, VULL.

THIS IS SPECTACULAR. IF ONLY ***WE'D*** KILLED JIMMY AND NOT THAT M.I.5 ***EXPLOSION.*** AH, WELL...

"AT LEAST IT MEANS ALL THAT LETHAL SIXTIES ESPIONAGE IS FINALLY ***DONE*** WITH.

"ALL THE MASTER-PLANS, THE MEGALOMANIAC ***CAPERS*** AND THE CORPSES THEY LEFT ***BEHIND.***

Malcolm Lowry Tunnel

"THE ***PENNIES*** WON'T MISS IT EITHER. I SHOULD FIND THEM--WELCOME THEM ABOARD.

"I MEAN, NOW THAT MURDERING BASTARD'S GONE WE CAN RELAX AND ***CELEBRATE,*** CAN'T WE?"

BOARDI

WHERE'S EMMA GOING?

TO MAKE SURE THOSE M.I.5 RECEPTIONISTS WE RESCUED ARE ALL RIGHT. HEARD ABOUT THE BLAZING WORLD, INCIDENTALLY. FUCKING ***PROSPERO,*** EH?

I'D BEST CHECK THE PROGRESS OF THIS FANTASTICAL ***APOCALYPSE*** HE'S INSTIGATED. ANY UPDATES, MR. VAN DUSEN?

No country is unaffected, Captain.

Human civlization is everywhere suffering collapse, as I predicted.

In Ireland, humanoid pig-monsters are reportedly teeming from a precarious clifftop edifice in County Galway.

Closer to the Riallaro Archipelago, distress messages from Zara's Kingdom suggest it has fallen to the fish-creatures from nearby Marsh's Island.

It is as well we're firing Lincoln before they can shoal this far south.

FIRING LINCOLN? JACK, YOU'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT BURNING THE WHOLE CITY, ARE YOU? NOT WITH ALL THE ***MEMORIES*** THIS PLACE HOLDS?

HAVING KNOWN A FEW PIRATES, I'D SAY THAT'S ***EXACTLY*** WHAT HE'S GOING TO DO.

REGRETTABLY, YES. BETTER INCENDIARY CHARGES THAN LINCOLN'S SECRETS REVEALED TO ***LESSER*** BRIGANDS.

FIRE THE ISLAND, MR. VAN DUSEN.

"DESTROY THE HAVEN SHAPED BY MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER FROM THIS WORLD'S CRIMINAL DREGS.

"THE SANCTUARY WHERE THIS PLANET'S FOREMOST PIRATE-CLANS HAVE FORGED AN UNASSAILABLE ***DYNASTY.***

"PUT TO THE TORCH THE SOARING KINGDOM OF MY CHILDHOOD, WITH ALL ITS MARVELS.

"LET NOTHING REMAIN.

"COME...WE'LL LOCATE OUR ASSIGNED BUNKS BEFORE TAKE-OFF. HISTORY ITSELF IS ABLAZE."

Final U.K. broadcasts depict Oxfordshire constabulary overwhelmed by extra-dimensional horrors. Increasingly, Earth's nations fall *SILENT.*

Please secure yourselves. Our launch is imminent.

S-SO WE'RE REALLY LEAVING THIS WORLD FOREVER? IS EVERYONE ***ABOARD?*** WHAT ABOUT THE GALLEY-WAG?

THE *ROSE OF NOWHERE,* THOUGH ACCOMPANYING US, LAUNCHES ***SEPARATELY.*** NOW, LET US MAKE ***HASTE.***

WELL, YOU'VE CERTAINLY THOUGHT ABOUT ALL THIS, THESE FOLDAWAY LAUNCH-COUCHES THROUGHOUT THE SHIP...

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S ALL OVER. HOW LONG ARE WE IN THE COUCHES?

ONCE BEYOND EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE, INERTIA-BASED ***GRAVITY*** COMMENCES. PLEASE, TAKE YOUR PLACE. LINCOLN'S SYMPHONY ENTERS ITS LAST ***MOVEMENT.***

We are currently at ignition minus thirty.

"THE ORCHESTRATIONS OF MY ANCESTORS FALL MUTE."

I'M DEFYING GRAVITY!

ENGLAST

Minus twenty-five.

"CYMBALS HUSHED, THEIR MUSIC ENDS, ITS CANNON-BALL PERCUSSIONS AT LAST DONE..."

Minus twenty.

"...AND FROM ITS ECHO RISES UP A FANFARE ALL IN BRASS."

Minus fifteen.

"TUBAS ROAR FROM ROCKET-ENGINE THROATS AND NOTES CASCADE LIKE MOLTEN ORE..."

Minus ten.

"...INTO THIS FINAL CRASHING CHORD..."

Minus five.

"...WHEREAFTER THERE IS BUT THE VACUUM'S PERFECT SILENCE."

2010 A.D. +++ TERMINUS +++ TAG +++

BAD MOON RISING

THERE GOES THE WORLD, THEN.

JACK, THIS TROPHY-CHAMBER IS MAGNIFICENT, BUT WHY DID YOU SPECIFICALLY WANT TO SPEAK TO *US?*

I THOUGHT IT BEST WE CONSULT WITH MS. ASTRO AND MR. GANZZ REGARDING THEIR *INTERPLANETARY* CONCERNS.

YOU SEE, WE WILL SHORTLY BYPASS EARTH'S MOON WHERE, ACCORDING TO MR. VAN DUSEN'S SIGNAL INTELLIGENCE, THERE IS SOMETHING BADLY *WRONG.*

SPIN

2010 A.D. Talent Token

Replaceable Script Unit
AARON MOLE

Replaceable Art Unit
NEVILLE KOIN

Replaceable Colour Unit
DAMIEN LIMBWAG

Replaceable Letters Unit
LEN ODDKIT

THAT MATCHES FUTURE HISTORY. COULD THIS *PROSPERO* BE INFLUENCING THE *MOON?*

Conceivably. The black *MONOLITHS* discovered there a decade ago began transmitting when the disturbances commenced on *EARTH.*

TRANSMITTING WHAT, AND TO WHOM?

The signals were apparently intended for Luna's *INSECT* population, the *SELENITES.*

Previously reclusive, these tank-sized arthropods are currently assaulting Earth's lunar colonies.

As seen in these final broadcasts from Germany's *ROTWANG* base, the selenites carry before them a frozen human cadaver, presumably their tribal *DEITY.*

OH GOD. TH- THAT'S SELWYN *CAVOR!*

With the European, Chinese and Russian colonies already overrun, the last human outpost, America's "Pride of Baltimore" base, faces certain annihilation.

As elsewhere, the insects are destroying living facilities while leaving manufacturing plants and space vehicles *UNTOUCHED.*

The attacks appear strategically *DIRECTED.*

DM

Link Violeen's All-He-Can-Draw Robot Works

The insects possibly mistake monolith transmissions for commands from their IDOL.

I--I MIGHT **KNOW** SOMETHING ABOUT THIS...

IN 1965, AFTER THE SEVEN STARS DISBANDED, PROSPERO SENT ME TO THE MOON WITH THE **GALLEY-WAG.**

WE DISCOVERED **TWO** WARRING RACES: NATIVE **SELENITES** AND ADVANCED AMAZON WOMEN MIGRATED FROM A DISTANT **GALAXY.**

THEIR MALES DEAD FROM PLAGUE, THE AMAZONS HAD ABDUCTED CAVOR, THE SELENITES' GOD, FOR HIS FROZEN **SPERM.**

I AVERTED WAR, RETURNING CAVOR'S BODY TO THE INSECTS AND FINDING THE AMAZONS ANOTHER ICE-PRESERVED **DONOR.**

TH-THEY FACED **EXTINC-TION.**

This perhaps explains the naked humanoid cavalry at present repurposing the captured terrestrial BASES...

MOON FARGO

They're loading warriors and food-animals aboard Earth's spaceships before LAUNCHING.

A WAR FLEET! WE MUST **PRE-PARE.**

JACK, IS THIS **ALL** PROSPERO'S DOING, OR SIMPLY AMAZON **OPPOR-TUNISM?**

WE CANNOT SAY, WE CAN ONLY **ORGANISE.**

THIS LUNAR ARMADA MIGHT BE HEADED FOR EARTH, OR, CONCEIVABLY, FOR **US.**

MINA? WHAT'S GOING ON?

L-LUNAR BEINGS. THEY'RE LAUNCHING AN **ATTACK...**

MR. VAN DUSEN? PATCH ME THROUGH TO THE **ROSE OF NOWHERE.**

IMPERISHABLE GALLEY-WAG, WARSHIPS ARE LEAVING THE MOON. WHERE ARE THEY HEADED? DO YOU SEE THEM?

WHY-AYE...

I FIRSTWARD BETHUNK THEY'M WAS BOUNDED FER YER HOMEWHIRL...

...HOWEVERLY, I'M NOW RACKONIN' ALTERWISE.

I'M RACKONIN' VENUS.

...FOUND THE AMAZONS A NEW INSEMINATION SOURCE. I--I HAD NO ***CHOICE...***

WELL, THAT EXPLAINS WHY HALF THESE "AMAZONS" ARE ***MEN.***

WE'LL HAVE NEWS FROM VENUS SOON.

THE INVASION'S PRESUMABLY UNDERWAY, BUT ANY INFORMATION TAKES LONGER ***ARRIVING.***

SHAMEFULLY, I AM RELIEVED THAT VENUS IS THE ARMADA'S TARGET.

I'D FEARED IT WOULD BE ***MARS.***

GARATH, IT YET MIGHT. FUTURE HISTORY IS RATHER INSISTENT.

I'M STILL ASSIMILATING AN ENTIRE LUNAR RACE UNKNOWN TO M.I.5...

Captain? The anticipated transmissions from Venus have arrived.

The sole habitable region PERELAND, formerly MEKONTA, is bloodily defeated.

Carson City has fallen and its empress, The Mekonia, is deposed.

Only SPACEPORTS are being spared.

AGAIN, ONLY ***SPACEPORTS*** LEFT STANDING...

WE THREE SHOULD CONFER. I LACK YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF INTERPLANETARY CONFLICT.

OF COURSE. EMMA'S CABIN'S ON THIS LEVEL. WE CAN WAIT THERE.

THANK YOU. I'LL CALL WITH ANY DEVELOPMENTS.

MINA, YOU'RE ***DROOLING.***

LEAVE HER ALONE. I'M MORE INTERESTED IN HEARING ABOUT THIS RACE OF PREVIOUSLY UNDISCOVERED ***AMAZONS.***

SERIOUSLY.. DID YOU TWO HOOK UP IN THE BLAZING WORLD?

ORLANDO, ***DROP*** IT.

MINA, YOU SAID THESE AMAZONS HAD ***MIGRATED.*** WHERE FROM?

THE UNIVERSE'S OLDEST, FURTHEST EDGES. THEY SETTLED THE MOON, CULTIVATING OXYGENATING ***MOSS.***

REALLY? CAN THE MOON'S GRAVITY HOLD AN ATMOSPHERE?

MY ROOM'S DOWN HERE, INCIDENTALLY.

HERE WE ARE...

I--I THINK THE MOON'S GRAVITY-POCKETS DEPEND ON THOSE ***MONOLITHS*** DISCOVERED A DECADE AGO.

HMM. THAT HAVE RECENTLY BECOME ***ACTIVE*** AGAIN...

I SHAGGED A TROGLODYTE BESIDE A SHATTERED ***TERRESTRIAL*** MONOLITH ONCE.

THAT WAS JUST BEFORE I ENLISTED AT ***TROY,*** WHERE...

...OR HAVE I ALREADY TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT?

YOU MAY HAVE MENTIONED IT. EMMA, YOUR CABIN'S GOT ITS OWN ***LIBRARY!***

IT'S SPECIAL TEAM EPHEMERA FROM MY M.I.5 ARCHIVE.

HERE--HAVE YOU SEEN ***LEWD WORLDS?***

JOHN THOMAS DISH OF THE DAY

ZIAD

J.K.HARACEHENKO

IT'S A BRITISH SCIENCE-FICTION MAGAZINE FROM 1969...

OOH, YES! I REMEMBER RELATING MY ***LUNAR*** ADVENTURES TO ITS EDITOR, JAMES ***COLVIN.***

PARIS, 1968. WE WERE DRUNK.

OBVIOUSLY, I ALTERED ***DETAILS,*** RELOCATING CAPTAIN UNIVERSE'S BASE TO THE ***MAGELLANIC*** CLOUD, FOR EXAMPLE.

SERIOUSLY? AFTER THE BOLLOCKING I GOT FOR REVEALING AYESHA'S ***POOL?***

HA. FAIR POINT.

LANDO, ***YOUR*** REVELATIONS TRIGGERED THE ***APOCALYPSE!*** MINE WERE...

LADIES, FORGIVE ME.

WE'VE ESTABLISHED THAT THE LUNAR INVADERS ARE COMMANDEERING VENUS'S SPACE-FLEET, AS WITH THE MOON'S.

WE ASSUME THEIR NEXT TARGET IS ***MARS.***

2010 A.D. +++ TERMINUS +++ TAG +++

APPROACHING THE RED PLANET, THE SHIP'S ATMOSPHERE WAS TENSE AND HOT, WITH BEADED PERSPIRATION TRICKLING DOWN BARE RIBS BENEATH ACRYLIC UNIFORMS...

...SO ***SUDDEN,*** JIM. AREN'T WE TOO ***OLD?***

I'VE CONSIDERED THAT. WITH THE INVENTIVENESS OF ***LEONARDO,*** I COULD POSSIBLY BACK-ENGINEER AYESHA'S YOUTH-RESTORING ***POOL*** FROM TRACES IN OUR FRIENDS' ***BLOOD-STREAMS.***

AT LEAST SAY YOU'LL THINK ABOUT IT...

ORLANDO? DO YOU SUPPOSE THERE'S SOME-THING MINA'S NOT ***TELLING*** US?

MINA? YEAH, USUALLY. I'M JUST HEADING TO MEET HER NOW.

SHE SEEMS EVASIVE ABOUT HER ***LUNAR*** ADVENTURES.

IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING.

LOOK, THE ***PENNIES*** WANTED TO SEE ME. I'LL CATCH YOU ON THE BRIDGE LATER.

FAIR ENOUGH.

AN APPREHENSIVE HUSH SETTLED EVERYWHERE, PUNCTUATED ONLY BY URGENT BULLETINS...

Mr. Ganzz and Ms. Astro approach their destination.

SO, ANYTHING HAPPENING?

SATIN AND GARATH. THEY'RE INVESTIGA-TING ***MARS.***

MR. VAN DUSEN, DO WE HAVE A ***VISUAL*** CONTACT?

We have a link via Ms. Astro's belt camera ready for transmission, but you should be warned:

This is the third world we have seen ended in as many *DAYS.*

OH, FUCKING ***GEHENNA...***

MARSMAGEDDON

2010 A.D.

Talent Token

Replaceable Script Unit
ELON AROMA

Replaceable Art Unit
NEIL LOVEKIN

Replaceable Letters Unit
DEL INKDOT

MS. ASTRO? WHAT ARE WE SEEING?

WE'RE ABOVE ***WOTAN.*** THE INVADERS ARE DESTROYING ESCAPE ROUTES ACROSS THE SCHIAPARELLI CANAL.

THESE ARE ***SURGICAL*** STRIKES.

THE PSYCHIC DISTRESS FROM ***SORNISIA*** I'M REGISTERING SUGGESTS A ***PLANET-WIDE*** ASSAULT.

CAN WE INVESTIGATE MY HOME?

CERTAINLY. NAUTILUS? WE'RE VISITING ***NEW VARNAL.***

THAT'S WEST OF WOTAN, BORDERING GULLIVAR'S LAND?

GULLIVAR'S LAND WAS RENAMED ***HITHERIUM,*** BUT YES--IT'S GARATH'S BIRTHPLACE, WITH SOME INTERESTING ***STRUCTURES*** IN ITS VICINITY.

INTERESTING STRUCTURES?

WELL, THE **STENDAHL** HOUSE IS FURTHER WEST, AND... WAIT. WE'VE REACHED NEW VARNAL. FROM THE MASSACRED **DEFENSE-BANTHS,** IT APPEARS ALREADY **CAPTURED.**

THE STATUE OF HÉLÈNE SMITH IS GONE. WITHOUT IT, MY CITY'S **MORALE** WOULD COLLAPSE.

THE INVADERS ARE AS TACTICALLY BRILLIANT AS THEY ARE **RUTHLESS.** NOTHING CAN BE DONE.

WE'RE CONTINUING WESTWARD...

HI, EMMA. ARE THE PENNIES OKAY?

THEY'RE FINE. THE INVADERS' STRATEGIES ARE UN-BEATABLE, THEN?

FOR A FORMERLY PACIFISTIC RACE, APPARENTLY SO.

THAT'S MINA'S **INTER-VENTION:** MORE AGGRESSIVE **MALES.**

THIS ISN'T **MY** FAULT.

NOBODY SAID IT **WAS**...BUT THESE LUNITES DO SEEM FIENDISHLY **CLEVER.**

NAUTILUS, WE'VE FOUND HÉLÈNE SMITH'S STATUE.

IT'S DESTROYED, BUT MY SENSORS SUGGEST THAT IT WAS SHORTLY **BEFORE** THE INVASION, IN AN ATTACK FROM THE **WEST.**

SMITH WAS A 19th-CENTURY TERRESTRIAL MEDIUM WORSHIPPED IN NEW VARNAL AS A **PROPHET,** THOUGH SHE NEVER FORESAW **THIS.**

IF FORCES FROM THE WEST DID THIS, WE SHOULD INSPECT THE STENDAHL HOUSE, FURTHER ON.

WHAT'S THAT?

AN **ANOMALY.** BUILT BY WILLIAM STENDAHL IN 2005, DESTROYED THAT SAME YEAR, IT HAS APPARENTLY **RE-GENERATED.**

What?

BEING ECCENTRICALLY DESIGNED AFTER THE FICTIONS OF AUTHOR EDGAR ALLAN POE, IT'S KNOWN AS **USHER II.**

HOW IT REBUILDS ITSELF ISN'T CLEAR, BUT...

SATIN? I'VE DISCOVERED WHAT TOPPLED SMITH'S STATUE, ABETTING THE **INVASION.**

IN DUAL-MOONED DUSK WHERE GREY SEDGE BRISTLED FROM PINK MARTIAN SOIL, THAT DISMAL MANSION OVERLOOKED THE BLACK AND LURID WATERS OF ITS TARN.

SELF-RESURRECTED BY ROBOTIC WORKINGS, THE BLEAK EDIFICE ONCE MORE POURED FORTH ALL ITS SUPPRESSED, FORGOTTEN AND DELETED FICTIONS, ALL ITS BOOK-BURNED REVENANTS.

POE'S RAZOR-WIELDING APE DANCED IN THE CAULDRON-STEAM OF SHAKE-SPEARE'S THREE WEIRD SISTERS. BLACKWOOD'S WENDIGO HOWLED GLITTERING CIRRUS ICE INTO AN OTHERWORLDLY STRATOSPHERE.

STIRRED BY THE CHILL WIND OF APPROACHING NIGHT, FADED ROSE DUNES SHIFTED UNEASILY. ON A RED PLANET, THE RED DEATH ANNOUNCED HIS AWFUL KINGDOM.

NAUTILUS, WE'RE HEADING BACK.

IT'S AN INSURRECTION OF THE FANTASTICAL, LIKE ON EARTH.

INDEED. WE'LL SEE YOU SOON.

IS THIS *ALL* PROSPERO'S DOING? THIS, THE MONOLITHS, EVERYTHING?

M-MY MISSION TO THE MOON CONCERNED THE MONO-LITHS.

PROSPERO DIDN'T WANT CERTAIN LUNAR AREAS EXPLORED BEFORE THE 21st CENTURY COMMENCED...

THAT'S WHEN THE MONOLITHS WERE *DISCOV-ERED.*

MONOLITH BROADCASTS PRECIPITATED THE ***LUNAR*** UPRISING. WHY NOT ***THIS*** UPHEAVAL TOO?

TH-THEN THIS HAS ALL BEEN FAERIE'S PLAN SINCE ***PREHISTORY?*** TO SUBORDINATE THE ENTIRE ***SOLAR SYSTEM?***

THAT SEEMS LIKELY.

IT PRESENTS PROBLEMS, THOUGH, FOR MY ***OWN*** PLANS REGARDING THE *NAUTILUS* AND OUR CURRENT EXPEDITION.

I'D ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO SETTLE THE ***ASTEROID BELT.***

ESTABLISHING A NEW LINCOLN ISLAND, WE COULD HAVE PLUNDERED THE INNER PLANETS WITH MINIMAL RESISTANCE. NOW, HOWEVER...

Hmm.

SO MINA'S LUNAR EXPEDITION WAS PROSPERO ***PREPARING*** ALL THIS?

LOOK, ***I*** DIDN'T KNOW!

BUT PROSPERO ***DID.***

HE KNEW ABOUT THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SELENITES AND THE AMAZONS, AND HE KNEW WHAT YOU'D DO TO ***PREVENT*** IT.

THAT FUCKER KNOWS ***EVERY-THING.***

I--I DID WHAT I THOUGHT BEST.

YES: YOU FOUND THE AMAZONS A NEW FROZEN SPERM-DONOR, PRESUMABLY AS INTELLIGENT AS SELWYN ***CAVOR.***

HUH. ***THAT'S*** A TALL ORDER.

MINA, NOBODY'S BLAMING YOU. AN OMNISCIENT MAGICIAN MANIPULATED EVERYONE...

...BUT WHERE ***DID*** YOU OBTAIN THE GENETICS TO REPLENISH THE AMAZON POPULATION?

W-WE FOUND A VACUUM-PRESERVED BODY ORBITING THE EARTH. IT...

...IT WAS PROFESSOR JAMES MORIARTY.

NAUTILUS? *YOU MIGHT WANT TO SEE THIS.*

WE'RE CROSSING ***WOTAN*** *ON OUR WAY BACK. ITS TELESCREENS ARE ANNOUNCING THE PLANET'S NEW EMPEROR AS* ***LAMARR THE FIRST...***

HE'S FOUNDING THE DYNASTY THAT I TRAVELLED THROUGH TIME TO ISSUE MY FUTILE ***WARNING*** AGAINST.

HE'S ***THE LORD OF MARS.***

UH...PRINCE DAKKAR?

I'M PROUD TO SAY THAT CAROL HAS ACCEPTED MY PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

AS CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP, WE WERE HOPING THAT YOU'D PERFORM THE ***CEREMONY...***

...OR IS THIS NOT A GOOD TIME?

BEHIND, IN THE UNCARING INTERPLANETARY DARK, THE SPHERE OF WARFARE LAY ITSELF DEFEATED AND THE GREAT SHIP VENTURED ON INTO THE VOID, WITHOUT A DESTINATION.

2010 A.D. +++ TERMINUS +++ TAG +++

HERE IT IS! THE COMIC-BOOK EVENT YOU'VE ALL BEEN WAIT-ING FOR!

★ ★ ★ The Wedding of ★ ★ ★ CAPTAIN UNIVERSE AND ELECTROGIRL!

LOOK, JACK. HUNDREDS OF MONOLITHS, SPEWING FROM A GIANT VERSION ORBITING ***JUPITER.*** IT'S AS WELL YOU ABANDONED YOUR ASTEROID BELT IDEA.

WELL, WHEN MR. LOGAN OFFERED ME HIS ***UNIVERSARIUM*** IN THE OORT CLOUD IF I'D UNDERTAKE HIS MARRIAGE, IT SEEMED THE LOGICAL ***DECISION.***

2010 A.D.

Talent Token

Replaceable Script Unit
NERO ALAMO

Replaceable Art Unit
LEN LIKEVINO

Replaceable Colour Unit
NIGEL MAIMBAWD

Replaceable Letters Unit
D.D. TOLKIEN

OH, SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'VE GOT MATTERS TO ATTEND BEFORE THEY TIE THE KNOT.

I'LL SEE YOU THERE.

GAH...

NNAH!

JIMMY.

DO COME IN.

I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.

Y-YOU FUCKING BITCH. HOW DID...?

THE SECRETARIES TOLD ME YOU WERE ON BOARD. THEY'D RECOGNISED YOUR COLOGNE.

AND ACTUALLY, IT'S ***DAME*** FUCKING BITCH.

I'LL CARVE THAT ON YOUR HEADSTONE, YOU...

AAAA!

THAT WAS THREE OF YOUR RIBS, AND ONE OF YOUR LUNGS.

YOU'RE NO FIGHTER. ALWAYS RELYING ON GADGETS. NEVER ENOUGH TRAINING.

:HAHHH: O-OH, YOU...

RRRAAA!:

...FUCKING BITCH? YES. YOU SAID.

THAT WAS YOUR SHOULDER.

:HAHHH: OH, FUCK. L-LOOK, WE CAN TALK. YOU DON'T HAVE TO...

NO, WE CAN'T.

AND YES, I DO.

THAT WAS YOUR BRAIN.

YOU KILLED PEOPLE I LOVED, MERCILESSLY. I OUGHT TO LEAVE YOU IMMORTAL, LIKE THIS, FOREVER.

BUT I'M NOT YOU.

UH.

UH.

SHUSH, JIMMY. SHUSH. YOU'VE HAD A GOOD INNINGS.

THIS IS LONG PAST DUE.

UH.

DUM... DA DA DADAA.

DA DA DADAAAA!

I SPY

YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE

GREAT PAN

GREAT PAN

...AS A JANITOR, YOU SAY? NO. NO, I UNDERSTAND. TELL HER WE'LL CLEAN HER CABIN IMMEDIATELY. NEMO OUT.

WELL, THE CROWD IS CERTAINLY FILLING UP THIS LECTURE-THEATRE YOU'VE HAD CONVERTED. WE SHOULD PROBABLY GO AND FIND SEATS OURSELVES.

WHO WAS THAT?

MR. ISHMAEL. APPARENTLY, YOUR M.I.5 HEAD WAS ABOARD POSING AS A JANITOR. MS. NIGHT HAS DEALT WITH THE MATTER.

D-DEALT...? BLOODY HELL. I'M GLAD SHE'S ON ***OUR*** SIDE.

JACK, I KNOW THIS HASN'T GONE HOW YOU'D PLANNED. I'VE COMPLICATED EVERYTHING, HAVEN'T I?

ONLY IN THE MOST GLORIOUS OF WAYS.

WHEN OUR WORLDS AND OUR HEARTS ARE CONSUMED BY A TEMPEST, WE CAN ALWAYS ONLY SEEK THE HIGHEST GROUND, BE THAT MORAL, INTELLECTUAL, OR LITERAL.

THAT HIGH GROUND, HOWEVER, MIGHT BE LONELY ON ONE'S OWN.

...I HEREBY PRONOUNCE YOU SUPER-MARVEL KING AND QUEEN OF THE SPACE-WAYS.

THE SHIP'S BACKUP GENERATORS ARE ON STANDBY.

YOU MAY KISS THE BRIDE.

NO MERE WORDS OF OURS CAN TRULY DESCRIBE THE TENDERNESS OF THIS MOMENT...SO WE WON'T EVEN TRY!

CHRIST ALMIGHTY...

CAPTAIN? THERE'S TWO FELLERS GIVIN' ME A HARD TIME, WANTIN' TO GET IN.

THEY SAY THEY'RE CALLED...

I DON'T CARE ***WHO*** THEY ARE, MR. COGHLAN. NO ONE COMES IN WITHOUT AN INVITE. THAT'S AN ORDER.

YOU HEARD HIM, LADS. WAS IT THE "FUCK" OR THE "OFF" YOU WEREN'T COMPREHENDIN'?

WE ***INVENTED*** YOU, YOU DIRTY TOILET!

UM... A-ACTUALLY, KEV, WE...

RIGHT, THAT'S IT. IT'S OUT THE AIRLOCK WIT' YEZ.

AAGH! QUICK, AL! DO SOME MAGIC!

UH, YEAH, SEE, THAT'S MOSTLY A ***CONCEPTUAL*** THING?

UNGRATEFUL BASTARDS! LET'S PUNISH THEM IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

KEV, THERE ISN'T A NEXT ISSUE.

ALSO, THEY'RE SHOOTING US OUT OF AN AIRLOCK.

CRUMBS. HOW ARE WE BREATHING?

WELL, REMEMBER WE'RE IN ***2010 A.D.***

THIS IS PROBABLY ONE OF THOSE ***AIR POCKETS*** THAT ARE DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT SPACE.

RIGHT. SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

BASICALLY YOU DIE, I CLAIM I CREATED EVERYTHING, THEN I GET WALK-ONS IN ALL THE ***PINK CHILD*** SPINOFFS.

AL, YOU'RE A COMPLETE CUNT.

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT! EVERYBODY'S IN LOVE OR DEAD, SO JOIN US NEXT TIME FOR...OH. RIGHT.

2010 A.D. +++ TERMINUS +++ TAG +++

SEVEN STARS

KRAKOS

ALAN BRENT — SUPER-BOYO

TOMMY WALLS GOOD AND BIG

COMMANDO GIBBS 1917-1964 DEAD by GUM

CAPTAIN UKIP

DAVID TERRY LITENING 1930-1964

STEVE STORM TORNADO 1938-1964

JU-JITSU JIMMY 1935-1964

BOBBY FLETCHER — MASTER-MAN 1926-1964 Oh RING of FATE...

CAPTAIN MIRACLE JOHNNY DEE 1928-1964 HE WAS GOOD TO HIS MUM.

RIP GARY 1933-1964 AKA GARRY we think...

MASK MAN

PETER PILKINGTON 1920-1964 DUN FIGHTING

JOHN JUSTI WONDER M 1918-1964

THE BAT ?-1964 TEN LIVES FOR ONE

*RETURNED TO LONDON TO FIND THE CITY AND ITS SUPERHEROES FACING ANNIHILATION FROM **THE 'MASS,** CAN THIS REALLY BE--*

THE SEVEN STARS... NO MORE?

ON A GRIM MISSION, VULL AND ZOM VISIT A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN TOOTING...

*IT'S MY **SEVEN STARS** CHUMS! I WONDER WHAT THEY WANT?*

NIT NURSE

*TOBY, LONDON'S IN **PERIL!** ONLY YOUR FORMER SELF CAN SAVE IT!*

*ASSISTED BY **ZOM**...OF THE **ZODIAC!***

*BLIMEY! Y-YOU MEAN RELINQUISHING MY NEWFOUND **POPULARITY?***

*BUT THAT'S ME BEING **SELFISH.** DO WHAT YOU **HAVE** TO, MR. ZOM.*

*IF LONDON NEEDS HIM, TOBY THE VARIOUSLY-SIZED SCHOOLBOY STANDS **READY!***

AND SO, SURPRISINGLY QUICKLY IN CENTRAL LONDON...

LONDON

THANK **SPACE!** IT'S VULL AND ZOM... WITH THE ONLY SUPER-POWERED BEING WHO CAN **RESCUE** THIS 'MASS-INFESTED METROPOLIS!

DO WHAT? SO **'E'S** OUR SAVIOUR? BUT THAT'S TOBY THE FAT **SCHOOLBOY!** 'E'S JUST AN ENORMOUS TUB O' **LARD!**

SHUT IT, YOU **SLAG!** FROM THIS DAY ON, 'E SHALL BE KNOWN AS TOBY... THE **BIG-HEARTED** SCHOOLBOY!

WE'D BETTER PRAY VULL'S DESPERATE PLAN IS GOING TO **WORK,** BECAUSE IF IT **DOESN'T,** WE'RE ZITZED!

AND ABOVE THE MULTITUDE...

GREAT DRIBBLING **AQUARIUS!** THE 'MASS DEVOURS THE CITY AND ITS COSTUMED DEFEND-ERS ALIKE!

THERE, TOBY! THERE IS LONDON'S ENEMY!

RRRAAARRGH! TOBY **SEES** IT!

IT...IS... **TUCK!**

GROMMF SNOFF

MERCIFUL **MARCONI!** LOOK AT THAT BUTTER-FED BEHEMOTH **GO!** HE'S WOLFING DOWN THAT 'MASS AS IF IT WERE A SLIGHTLY UNDER-COOKED MUSHROOM **OMELETTE!**

LET'S HOPE HIS **EYES** AREN'T BIGGER THAN HIS **BELLY,** WOT?

BUT, HOURS LATER...

GREAT WORK, TOBY! HOW ARE YOU FINDING IT?

THOUGH I'D FORETOLD DOOM, HE HAS ALMOST **DEVOURED** THE MONSTER! IT MAKES ME DOUBT THE VALIDITY...OF THE **ZODIAC!**

GRRURRRGH! C-COULD USE... SOME SALT...

UNTIL, FINALLY...

IT IS... URRRP... DONE!

LOOK **OUT!** THOSE THOUSANDS OF TONS OF HOSTILE ALIEN FUNGUS THAT HE'S INGESTED MUST HAVE SOMEHOW IMPACTED NEGATIVELY ON HIS **HEALTH!**

HE'S GOING TO **FALL!** RUN FOR YOUR **LIVES!**

OH NO! TOBY HAS CONSUMED EVERY LAST SCRAP OF THE 'MASS IN A SINGLE **SITTING...** BUT AT WHAT **COST?**

MY MARTIAN SENSES AND HIS AGONISED WRITHINGS TELL ME THAT HE YET **LIVES!**

LET US LAND ON HIS BIG FACE AND SEE IF WE CAN **COMFORT** HIM!

GRROOANN G-GETTING DARK. DID...DID TOBY WIN?

Y-YES, YOU BRAVE, WONDERFUL BOY-MOUNTAIN. THE WORLD CAN NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR COURAGEOUS SACRIFICE!

TRULY, WITH YOUR DEMISE, ZOM SHALL TRANSFORM THEE TO YOUR OWN **MONUMENT.** PLACED NEAR FULCHESTER, IT WILL BE CALLED "THE FAT SCHOOL-BOY OF THE NORTH!"

I--I THINK HE'S GONE.

WHILE ZOM MAGICS THE DECEASED JUVENILE TO NEWCASTLE, HIS COMRADES **REFLECT...**

JOLLY GLOOMY BUSINESS, DONCHA KNOW?

P-PERHAPS WE'D BEST RETURN TO OUR HEAD-QUARTERS.

J-JIM, DO YOU MIND IF WE POSTPONE OUR **DATE?**

HMM. I GUESS ALL THIS TIGHTLY-COSTUMED DEATH **HAS** RATHER RUINED THE **MOOD.**

AYE, CAPTAIN UNIVERSE! AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS IS A MATTER OF...THE **ZODIAC!**

CONFOUND IT ALL, GEORGE! LOOK AT THIS ELASTICATED TECHNICOLOUR **MESS!**

I--I SUPPOSE OUR OPERATION **DOES** APPEAR UNSUC-CESSFUL...

GEORGE, IT'S A FLAMING **DISASTER!**

I MEAN, LOOK AT ALL THESE POSTHUMOUS IDIOTS! IF YOU ASK ME, WE WERE FOCUSSED ON THE WRONG CREEPING INSIDIOUS **BLIGHT!**

WELL, IF THOSE UNITED NATIONS ULTRA-PESTS THINK THEY'RE GOING TO BE THE ONLY SUPERMEN STANDING, THEY CAN THINK **AGAIN!**

MARK MY WORDS, GEORGE--THE SHOW-STEALING SEVEN STARS HAVEN'T HEARD THE **LAST** OF THIS!

AND NEXT DAY, AT THE HEROES' FITZROVIA FORTRESS...

BY ARES! THE BRITISH PRESS ARE LAMBASTING US! THEY'RE SAYING I'M AN ILLEGAL **IMMIGRANT** AND THAT SATIN IS A WANTED **CRIMINAL!**

WE'LL HAVE TO GO ON THE **RUN!** THERE'S EVEN ZITZERS CLAIMING THAT ALL OUR ADVENTURES REVOLVE AROUND **SEXUAL ASSAULTS!** I'M HUGELY ZITZED OFF!

PLUS I'VE JUST HEARD THAT AFTER ALL THIS SCANDAL, I'M BEING RECALLED TO THE **U.N.!** THE TEAM'S **FINISHED!**

SATIN

VULL

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE

ELECTRO GIRL

MARSMAN

FLASH AVENGER

ZOM

SPORT

the BEAST
SEVEN STARS DOOM HEFTY HERO

Daily Brute
DEPORT THIS PINK PARASITE

YOUR HOROSCOPE
LEO SCORPIO

I'M SORRY, EVERYONE... AND ESPECIALLY **YOU,** CAROL! I WANT YOU TO HAVE THIS, TO REMEMBER ME BY!

O-OH, JIM! I'LL TREASURE IT ALWAYS!

TO CAROL- YOU LIT A SPARK! -LOVE JIM XX

IF GARATH AND I WANT TO STAY AHEAD OF THE AUTHORITIES, WE'D BETTER GO NOW.

I'LL LEAVE WITH YOU. TH-THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME HERE.

ACTUALLY, I SHOULD BE TODDLING OFF **MYSELF!**

ZOM **ALSO.** THIS HAS BEEN AN UNFORTUNATE TURN OF...OF...

:CHOKE!: ZOM CANNOT EVEN **SAY** IT!

WELL, JIM LOGAN HAS A NEW YORK **FLIGHT** TO CATCH!

GOODBYE, VULL-- ALTHOUGH I COULD STILL TAKE YOU FOR A TOUR OF MY UNIVERSARIUM SOON, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED?

OF COURSE. GOODBYE, CAPTAIN. IT'S BEEN FUN.

:SIGH!:

WHY DID WE HAVE THESE NAMEPLATES ANYWAY? IT'S NOT AS IF WE DIDN'T KNOW WHO WE **WERE!**

VULL

SATIN

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE

AND WITH THAT WE CONCLUDE BOTH OUR SIX-PART NOVEL AND THE SENSATIONAL **SEVEN STARS!**

EPILOGUE I: THE UNIVERSARIUM, 1964.

CAPTAIN, YOUR HIDEOUT IS INDEED WONDROUS. THANKS FOR THE **TOUR,** AND FOR DONATING THE CORPSE OF ROCKET-MAN **JET BLACK** TO OUR FITZROVIA **TROPHY ROOM.**

IT'S REALLY **CAROL'S** TROPHY... NOT THAT I'LL EVER SEE HER AGAIN, PROBABLY.

CHEER UP, CAPTAIN. NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS, NOT EVEN **SATIN,** WHO'S **FORGOTTEN** IT.

I'M JUST HOPING MY EMOTIONS DON'T END UP ETERNALLY **FROZEN,** LIKE **STARDUST** HERE.

AND SPEAKING OF SATIN, HER AND **GARATH** SEEM TO HAVE DISAPPEARED PRETTY THOROUGHLY.

WELL, THEY'VE BOTH HAD LOTS OF **PRACTICE.**

JIM, DID WE SEVEN STARS TRULY **ACCOMPLISH** ANYTHING?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT I HAD A GREAT TIME!

COME ON, LET'S BOARD THE **UNICRUISER** AND TAKE YOU **HOME!**

PITY IT'S THE LAST TIME I'LL SEE YOUR **UNIVERSARIUM.**

WHO KNOWS? IT'LL BE HERE A FEW CENTURIES YET.

I HOPE SO. HOW ARE THINGS IN **AMERICA?**

IT'S GOT DOZENS MORE SUPERHEROES THAN ENGLAND. I'M THINKING OF **RETIRING.**

ME TOO. ONCE WHATEVER TASK MY MASTERS HAVE PLANNED IN **DUNBANE** IS OVER, I'M HANGING UP MY **CAPE.**

GOOD IDEA. THIS SUPERHERO BUSINESS PROBABLY WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER.

PERSONALLY, I WON'T MISS IT!

I MEAN, WHAT IN SPACE IS WRONG WITH BEING **HUMAN?**

ON THAT NOTE, THE LAST OF THE SEVEN STARS FALL BACK TO **EARTH!**

EPILOGUE II: THE WATKINS ESTATE, DUNDEE, 1968.

IT'S KIND OF YOU TO LET US STAY HERE, MR. FLASH.

AWCH, IT'S NAE BOTHER, HEN.

WI' NAEBODY WANTEN' US BRITISH SUPER-SHITES ANYMUR, AH'M GETTEN' **LOADS** O' THESE UNEMPLOYED BASTUDS LOOKEN' FE SOMEWHERE TAE PASS **OOT.**

NOT AS BAD AS MA OLD HOOSE ON **MERCURY,** MIND, BUT, AYE, ET'S PRETTY DEPRESSEN'.

AH'VE A WEE ROOM OOT THE BACK MIGHT SUIT YE...

AND...

WELL, I SUPPOSE THIS WILL DO FOR A COUPLE OF MONTHS.

IT **HAS** TO. OUR ONLY OTHER OPTION IS MIGRATING TO **BIGBURG.**

ISN'T THAT THE PLACE NEAR CACTUSVILLE IN TEXAS THAT'S STILL TECHNICALLY OWNED BY THE BRITISH?

IT'S MISERABLE. I WAS THERE IN THE 1950s, WHEN...

AAA! FE FUCK'S **SAKE!**

JEMMY, YE RADGE BASTUD! AH'M NO HAVEN' YOU MATERIALISEN' OOT O' NAEWHERE, STINKEN LIKE OOR GRANNY'S **MIDDEN!**

AH CANNAE HELP IT, JACKIE! AH SHITE MA PANTS TOMORROW!

AH THOUGHT IF MA MAGIC PATCH RETURNED ME TAE AN EARLIER **TIME,** AH MIGHT **PREVENT** ET!

YE **CANNAE** PREVENT ET, YE BAMPOT! THAT'D BE A SHITED TROOSERS **TIME PARADOX!**

HEHEH! FLAME-THROWER UNIT, ATTACK JEMMY'S SHITED **TROOSERS!**

JUMBO, YE WEE PSYCHO, DINNAE START...

I SECOND YOUR UNEXPRESSED THOUGHTS. WE LEAVE FOR BIGBURG TOMORROW.

AND SUBSE-QUENTLY, THE SEVEN STARS WERE NO MORE!

EPILOGUE III: THE UNIVERSARIUM, 2164.

:TSK: THERE GOES ANOTHER INVASION FLEET, HEADED FOR POOR OLD EARTH. I THINK THESE ARE THOSE THINGS FROM ***SKARO*** WITH THE EGG-WHISKS.

I MEAN, DIDN'T THAT WAR WITH THE ***ROMULANS*** ONLY FINISH RECENTLY? IT'S ABSOLUTELY ***RELENT-LESS.***

LIFE'S BETTER HERE ON ***NEW LINCOLN,*** ESPECIALLY SINCE CAPTAIN UNIVERSE RECREATED AYESHA'S POOL BEFORE DEPARTING ON HIS COSMIC ***HONEY-MOON.***

IT'S PERFECT FOR MY HUSBAND JACK'S PIRACY ALONGSIDE ORLANDO...WHO'S CALLING HERSELF ***SALLY QUASAR*** THESE DAYS, INCIDENTALLY.

HOW ARE ***YOU*** FINDING IT?

HURR. PERFECTLY REASONABLE, I SUPPOSE, CONSIDERING IT'S ALL I'VE EVER ***KNOWN.***

I'VE SEEN MY ORIGINAL'S SKELETON. ***HANDSOME*** FUCKER, WASN'T HE? AM I VERY LIKE HIM?

HA! VERY, EXCEPT YOU'VE GOT BOTH ***EARS*** AND YOUR...IMPULSES...ARE MORE CONTROLLED THAN THE ***FIRST*** EDWARD'S.

HUNNH. WELL, IF ASTROVIC AND GANZZ KEEP FINDING ME SLIMY LITTLE ***MARTIAN*** BASTARDS TO DISEMBOWEL, THEY'LL PROBABLY STAY CONTROLLED.

GOD, I ***HAVE*** MISSED YOU. LET'S SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING ON THIS HAUNTED JUKE-BOX THAT...AH! THE VERY THING!

EDWARD, SHALL WE DANCE?

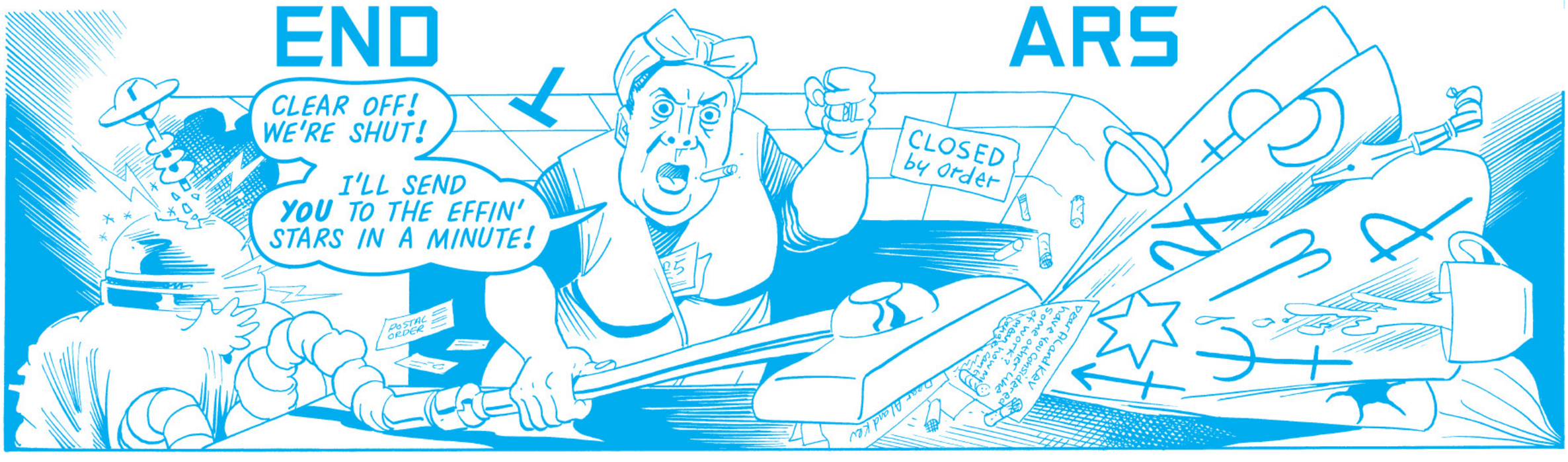
LINDA ROSA 1953

I WASN'T MESMERISED THE VALDEMAR WAY. AIN'T NO HYPNOSIS, HONEY, PREVENTIN' DECAY, BUT WE GOT ONE THING, WHATEVER THEY SAY-- IMMORTAL LOVE...

IMMORTAL LOVE, IMMORTAL LOVE, IMMORTAL LOVE

IMMORTAL LOVE.

AND THAT, WITH LOVE TO OUR FAITHFUL READERS, GENUINELY IS... ***THE END.***



We look backward to receiving your electronic mail! Send it here: tothestars@knockabout.com

Evenin', all! The 'Great News for Readers Inside' mentioned on the cover is that this is the last issue; Al and Kev are disappearing forever into witness protection; the comics industry and western civilisation as we know it are both coughing blood; and the universe is, of course, heading inexorably towards the black, freezing extinction of entropy! (We'd remind you that, as in the phrases 'The Great War', 'The Great Depression', 'Great Britain', and 'Make America Great Again', 'great' doesn't necessarily mean 'good.') So, let's all try to numb our feelings by struggling one last time through the hollow pantomime that is our letters page!

Dear Al and Kev: Made-up I may be, but the fifth chapter of your Seven Stars crappy black and white 1960s British comic is an insult to my condescendingly-imagined intelligence! How do any of these underdressed vigilantes know that their adversary is called "the 'Mass"? The Seven Stars only call it that because that's how poor Mark Tyme referred to it in chapter one! Now, in chapter five, we learn that Mark Tyme only called it "the 'Mass" because that's what Captain Universe had just told him! Don't you see that this fatally undermines the whole logic of what had, until then, been a perfectly believable narrative? The pair of you make me sick, and you may rest assured that I shall not be reading any comics that you may produce in my imaginary future! Yours disappointedly,

Chester Tester, Leicester.

Yeah, whatever.

Dear Al and Kev: Can I just say, as a beautiful and intelligent woman, how sorry I am that the comics world is losing its two wittiest and most handsome creators? I'm sure I speak for thousands of beautiful and intelligent women like myself when I say that the industry will be oafish and homely without you, and that I personally shall weep for the rest of my now-empty life. Yours, heartbroken,

Salome Einstein, Middlesbrough.

Salome, if only all our tragic projections of a female audience saw the world as clearly as you do! Sadly, an overwhelming majority of the women that we pretend to have received letters from accuse us of being racists and misogynists, which is particularly hurtful when it comes from people that we ourselves have invented. Of all our made-up female readers, Salome, you are by far the nicest, to the point where we imagine you having some sort of a face. Be lucky.

Dear Al and Kev: Like my pen-pal Chester Tester (above), I despise both you and your single published issue of The Seven Stars! The last page of chapter six, supposedly the culmination and payoff of this whole long-winded saga, made no sense at all! Who was that woman, and what was that she was dancing with? Was it Captain Hurricane? And where were they? And why was it drawn much better than all the other pages, and in colour? Despite your claims that readers here in 1964 should just follow the story and not worry about stray references, I perceive you as evil individuals who have, for some reason, spent twenty years of your lives subjecting your readership to a hateful quiz! That said, your portrayal of well-known contemporary characters like Ju-Jitsu Jimmy is both moving and profound. How about coming out of retirement to do a mini-series? Yours, with conflicting emotions,

Bing King, Tring.

Bing, our old bull and bush, while we never intended our background allusions as an obsessive-compulsive competition, we have a certain amount of sympathy with your grievance because you're stuck in 1964 with only an excellent library service to refer your questions to. If you'd hailed from fifty years later and had all the world's knowledge at your fingertips, we might have thought you were an indolent dolt who just liked having something to complain about.

Dear Al and Kev: As a middle-aged conservative incel sitting wedged behind my keyboard, trolling Alexandria Ocasio Cortez with my Batman T-shirt covered in Pringles, can I just ask, with a straight face, why you're leaving the comics business? Yours,

Hiram J. Comicsgate III, Oklahodahio.

Yes, Hiram, our old testament, you apparently can. And with that, as the ghost of Peggy Mount asks us to lift our feet so that she can hoover under them, we've reached the end of our long-running variety spectacular. Of course, we could never have got this far without the brilliantly inventive chameleon lettering of Todd Klein, taking over from the sublime Bill Oakley, or the glorious period-perfect colours of Ben Dimagmaliw. Chaps, it's been an absolute privilege working with you. We made quite a team, didn't we? And you, the readers who've been with us through all this; the people who've followed this book because they, y'know, enjoyed it and maybe thought that stitching all the world's culture into one ridiculous quilt was an interesting idea; you have always been part of that team. You're the most intelligent and appreciative audience we could ever have hoped for. Your support has meant everything, and that, alone in this delirious farrago of allusion and reference, is not a fiction. So, as we canter inexpertly into the smog, hopefully in the direction of the sunset, we waggle our Stetsons ambiguously and wish you all the fondest of farewells from your no-longer-relevant nonagenarians –

Al and Kev

VULL'S VAULT OF VITAL STATISTICS No.6:

ZOM–

Carcass with a Conscience!

Howdy, hearsay-hoarders! My final fact-finding foray into the fortunes of my friends focusses on do-gooder dead body, ZOM OF THE ZODIAC. Created by STANLEY KENDRICK PERKINS in one 1948 issue of Scion's BIG WIN comic, deceased horoscope compiler EUSEBIUS ZOM was granted the commendable power of transforming humans so they could solve their own problems by strange astrological entities. Working briefly with U.N. super-team THE SEVEN STARS in 1964, Zom was eventually discorporated in 1966 by weirdo aristocrat THE DUKE DE RICHLEAU, which was certainly an unfortunate turn of...

THE ZODIAC!

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RETIRING TYPES

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HOW DID YOU RESCUE US FROM CERTAIN DEATH IN INTERPLANETARY ***SPACE,*** AL? I THOUGHT WE WERE ***GONERS!***

ELLAFITZGERALD, MY DEAR KEV! I SIMPLY REMEMBERED THAT THE STARS WERE JUST BACKGROUND ART, AND THAT THIS WAS ACTUALLY OUR RENTED WAREHOUSE IN ***PECKHAM!***

HERE'S TO YOU MR. HEATH ROBINSON

INK

MERCIFUL CRIKEY! SO IT IS! I'D FORGOTTEN THIS WAS ALL MADE UP.

WAS THE PLACE ALWAYS THIS ***CLUTTERED?***

NO, WHEN WE MOVED IN TWENTY YEARS BACK, IT WAS EMPTY. YOU COULD GET LOST FOR ***DAYS.***

I REMEMBER. OUR HOWLS OF FRUSTRATED RAGE ALWAYS HAD AN ***ECHO.***

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH ALL THIS ***STUFF?***

WELL, I'D THOUGHT "FIRE," BUT WE'RE UNDER-INSURED. I'VE ARRANGED A REMOVAL VAN FOR LATER.

HOPE IT'S BIG ENOUGH. I MEAN, JUST THE WARDROBE DEPARTMENT ***ALONE...***

YEAH. THEN THERE'S THE ***SETS*** AND ALL THOSE FUCKING ***SUBMARINES*** TO INVENTORY.

FRANKLY, KEV, TODAY'S AUDIENCES DON'T UNDERSTAND THE ***LABOUR*** INVOLVED IN OLD-SCHOOL COMICS.

HUH! BACK ON ***2000AD,*** WE BUILT ALL THOSE ROBOTS BY ***HAND!***

I KNOW, KEV. I KNOW.

COME ON... THERE'S ONLY FOUR PAGES BEFORE THE ENDPAPERS.

:SIGH: I SUPPOSE.

ISN'T THIS OUR OLD ***LIMEHOUSE*** SET?

FORGET IT, KEV. IT'S CHINATOWN.

Y'KNOW, I REMEMBER THE LONG, TOUGH COUPLE OF MINUTES THAT I SPENT DESCRIBING ALL THOSE ***BATTLE-KITES*** FOR YOU TO CONSTRUCT AND DRAW.

I ALWAYS APPRECIATED YOUR POINTLESS DETAILS, AL.

THANKS. I WAS PARTICULARLY PROUD OF MY THIRTY-PAGES-PLUS-FOOTNOTES DISSERTATION ON THE ECONOMICS OF ***CAVORITE.***

WE'LL NEED SOMEWHERE SAFE TO ***TRANSPORT*** THAT, INCIDENTALLY.

LEAVE IT TO ME, AL!

OOH, LOOK! IT'S 1898 ***BARSOOM!***

YEAH. ALL THOSE ***BANTHS,*** AND OF ***COURSE*** THEY'D NEED TO DEFECATE! CLEARLY, I HADN'T THOUGHT THAT ONE THROUGH.

THE TRIPODS WERE WORSE. THEY COULD GET VERY LOUD AND SELF-OPINIONATED WHEN THEY'D HAD A DRINK.

MM. BUT THAT'S ***VICTORIANS*** FOR YOU. IN 1958, WITH *THE BLACK DOSSIER*, AT LEAST THE CHARACTERS COULD HOLD THEIR BOOZE.

THAT'S TRUE... ALTHOUGH SOME PEOPLE DIDN'T MUCH LIKE *THE BLACK DOSSIER*, DID THEY?

WELL, IT WASN'T THE BLOOMSBURY JUSTICE LEAGUE ANYMORE, THERE WAS TOO MUCH BOOK-READING, AND WE WERE UNKIND ABOUT JAMES BOND.

THAT'S WHEN WE LEARNED THAT CRITICISING POPULAR THINGS WOULD MAKE US HATED, WASN'T IT?

IT WAS INDEED. AND YET IN ***CENTURY*** WE DELIBERATELY MADE IT ***WORSE.*** DO YOU THINK THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH US?

I THINK IT'S FAIR TO SAY WE'RE COMPLEX FIGURES WHO'VE BEEN ON A JOURNEY.

EXACTLY! AND WE ALWAYS ADDRESSED READERS' ***CONCERNS:*** WHEN THEY FOUND *CENTURY* SLOW AND LITERARY, WE DID THE *NEMO* TRILOGY.

"TOO FAST AND LIGHTWEIGHT," THEY SAID.

THEY'RE UNGRATEFUL SAVAGES, AL, WHO'VE NEVER TRULY APPRECIATED YOUR GENIUS.

HOW RIGHT YOU AND THE DIALOGUE I'VE GIVEN YOU ARE, KEV! THOSE *NEMO* BOOKS WERE ***SPECTACULAR!***

WELL, I WAS PLEASED WITH MY ANTARCTIC CITY, AND METROPOLIS WAS PRETTY GOOD. THEN THERE WAS SUNKEN YU-ATLANCHI...

I WAS THINKING MORE OF THE WRITING, BUT, YEAH, Y'KNOW. IF YOU LIKE.

STILL, I RECKON WE SAVED THE BEST FOR LAST. *THE TEMPEST* WAS A PROPER KNEES-UP!

AND WHAT ABOUT THOSE SEVEN STARS?

HA HA! BEST SUPERHEROES EVER, AND THE MOST IRRITATING REPEATED USAGE...OF THE ***ZODIAC!***

HA HA HA! GOOD OLD ZOM!

HERE, DO WE HAVE TO FIT INFINITY AND HIS HILBERT HOTEL INTO THIS MOVING VAN?

1234

Plus one

NAH. I CAN FUDGE THAT WITH A POORLY-UNDERSTOOD MATHEMATICAL PARADOX. YOU JUST WORRY ABOUT HOW TO SHIFT THAT ***CAVORITE.***

DON'T YOU FRET, AL. CHARACTERISTICALLY, I'VE ALREADY GOT IT PLANNED DOWN TO THE MEANEST SCRUPLE!

I TRUST YOU, KEV. YOU'VE ALWAYS GIVEN THE APPEARANCE OF BEING TECHNOLOGICALLY CREDIBLE.

THANKS, AL, AND YOUR SPEECH-BALLOONS HAVE ALWAYS READ LIKE YOU MIGHT HAVE OVERHEARD SOME REAL PEOPLE TALKING ONCE, PERHAPS DURING INFANCY.

CHEERS FOR THAT, KEV. I'VE ALWAYS PRIDED MYSELF ON MY AUTHENTICITY.

MIND THOSE MILITARISED TEDDY-BEARS.

RIGHT. IT'S SURPRISING HOW STUFF BUILDS UP.

WELL, IF YOUR CONTINUITY INCLUDES EVERYBODY ***ELSE'S*** CONTINUITY, THAT'LL HAPPEN.

ALL THESE SLOPPY COMIC-BOOK "UNIVERSES" INFURIATE ME, KEV!

AL, ***EVERYTHING*** INFURIATES YOU.

GOOD POINT, KEV, BUT HOW IS ROUGHLY SIX BLOCKS IN CENTRAL MANHATTAN A FUCKING UNIVERSE? YOU MIGHT AS WELL SAY...

HANG ON.

WHO'S THIS?

BONJO: THE ULTIMATE EDITION

CAPTAIN KLEP THE TIGHTLY INDIGNANT MARS

THIS IS SALOME EINSTEIN, AL, FROM THE FINAL "SEND IT TO THE STARS."

MY MASTERS THESIS WAS TITLED, "KEVIN O'NEILL: HERO OR DEITY?"

B-BUT...

KEV, I MADE HER UP FOR THE LETTERS COLUMN...

AL, YOU MADE ***US*** UP FOR THE LETTERS COLUMN.

I'LL BE BACK SOON.

LOADING BAY

LAZOON

COLVIO

YOU BETTER BE. WE'VE ONLY GOT THE PAGE OPPOSITE BEFORE THE ***ENDPAPERS!*** HOW ARE WE TRANSPORTING THAT ***CAVORITE?***

KEV, THIS IS ***VERY*** DISAP-POINTING.

LAZOONS

COLVIO

YOU REALISE THIS IS HOW WE GET OUR DREADFUL REPUTATION, DON'T YOU?

DON'T TRUST HIM, SALOME! HIS GRANDFATHER PUNCHED OUT A ***HORSE!***

KEV?

REMEMBER, ONLY ONE SIMPLE TRUCK JOURNEY, AND THIS WILL ALL BE OVER.

DON'T BE DOWNHEARTED, BIG GUY.

IT CAN'T POSSIBLY GET ANY WORSE.

ANKI
IN THE POST
Cthulhu
AK
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